

Iran-Iraq
end
game



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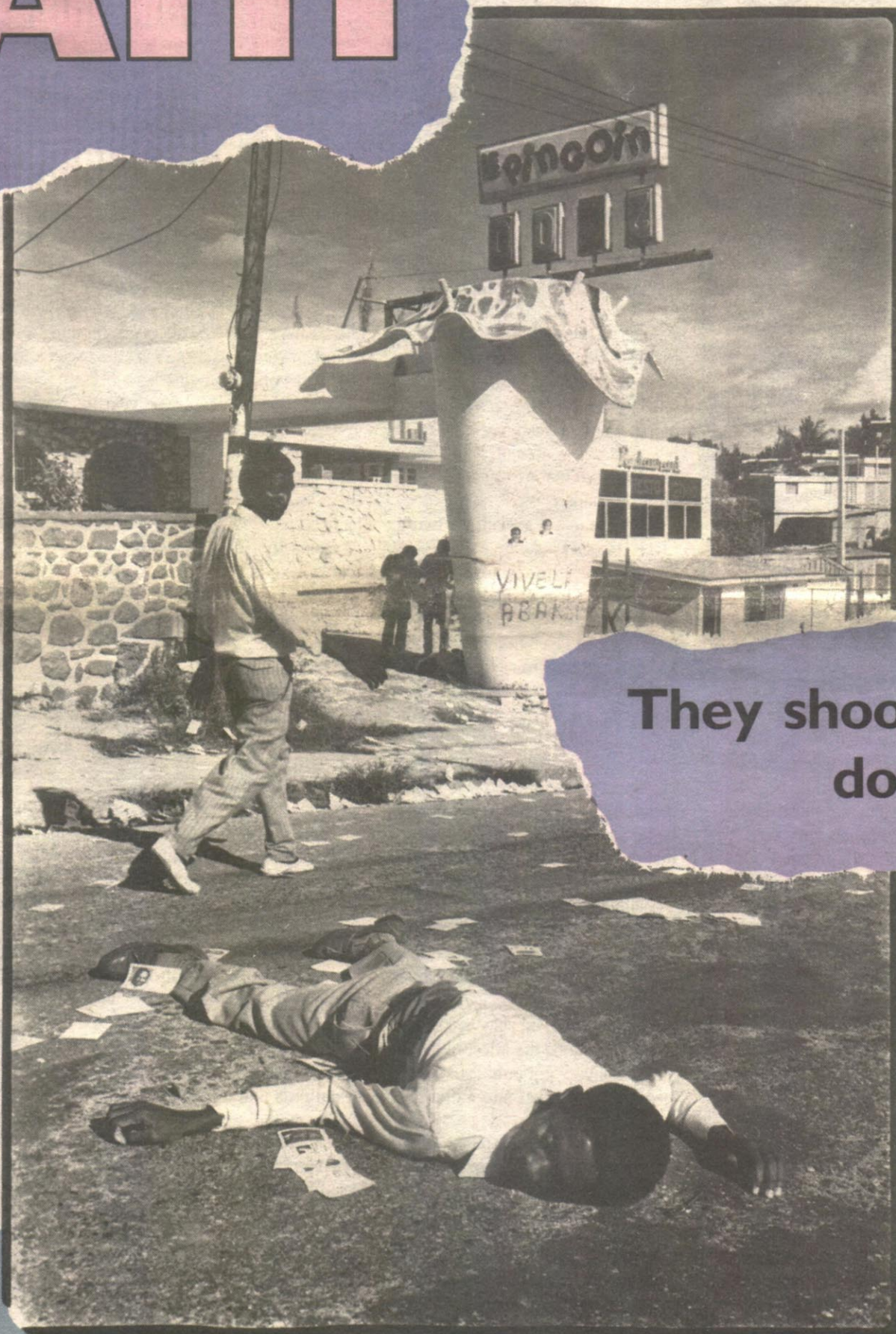
IN THESE TIMES

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They shoot voters,
don't they?

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Washington: Black dietary recklessness is culture-deep.

Deadly tradition in black America

By Salim Muwakkil

Lost among the elegant eulogies to late Chicago Mayor Harold Washington was the information that he may have been able to prevent his sudden collapse had he been more conscientious about his personal health and more discriminating in his dietary choices. Some officials have used the occasion of Washington's death, and his horrendous physical condition at the time, to increase public awareness of the need to pay more attention to matters of health and

diet, but black leadership by and large has squandered the opportunity to educate its constituency about the effects of lifestyle and diet on health and morbidity.

A partial reason for the reluctance fully to address this issue is the perverse pride invested in African-American cultural traditions that were honed in the rural South. So-called "soul food" is one of these hallowed traditions. This dietary category was created by slaves who had to make do with the waste products of white civilization; using scraps from the master's table, blacks created culinary art. For example, discarded hog intestines were transformed into "chitterlings," a dish that still is considered somewhat of a delicacy in black culture. But as an organ meat, chitterlings is high in cholesterol and thus is best avoided by health-conscious people. Many other staples of this traditional diet contain harmful elements.

Heavy salt use is also associated with the soul-food tradition. And since the black population suffers inordinately from the kinds of cardiovascular diseases that are easily aggravated by sodium consumption, this dietary practice increases black health risks dramatically. Gail Christopher, a Chicago-based clinical nutritionist who has long worked to improve the self-destructive dietary habits of the black community, says salt "is a poison for black Americans, plain and simple."

Nutritional ignorance: Christopher, who also holds a diploma from the Chicago National College of Naprapathy, has been conducting aggressive outreach programs for health awareness over the past 10 years. She's worked intimately with black communities across the class spectrum; from single mothers in Chicago's bleak Robert Taylor Homes—the largest public housing project in the country—to successful blacks in the middle-class Hyde Park community. "There is a growing awareness among more educated blacks that more care needs to be taken in terms of their health," Christopher notes. "But the realization still hasn't penetrated to that expanding population that people call the black underclass."

Since the mayor's death focused the attention of Chicago's blacks like little else could, the occasion should have been seized to infuse the black community with health information. Instead, the ignorance was perpetuated. For example, at the close of a memorial service held for the late mayor at Operation PUSH headquarters, Rev. Jesse Jackson told the crowd of nearly 2,000 and a radio audience of thousands more that PUSH cooks had prepared some "fried chicken and hog maws and other things that are no good for you but taste so good" for sale on the second floor of the cavernous building. While they were memorializing a man whose sudden demise was blamed, in part, on a dietary recklessness that is culture-deep, there seemed to be no awareness, even from someone as astute as Jackson, that those cultural practices need changing. While soul food may have served a noble historical function, it is now a health hazard.

"Excess deaths": According to Darwinian logic, African-Americans should be one of the country's heartiest ethnic groups. The enslaved Africans who made it through the murderous "Middle Passage" (in which an estimated 5-15 million perished) on slave ships bound for the Americas had to be among the fittest of the fit. However, the institution of slavery not only exploited blacks' Darwinian fitness, but it also set into motion behavior patterns that undermined it.

According to a 1985 study by the Task Force on Black and Minority Health commissioned by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the black American population is the least healthy group in the country. "This disparity is evident in life expectancy at birth, and is related in 'excess deaths' [deaths that would not have occurred had blacks experienced the same age-sex death rate as whites] as well as other measures of mortality and morbidity." In analyzing mortality data from 1979 to 1981, the Task Force identified six causes of death that account for more than 80 percent of the excess mortality observed among blacks: cardiovascular diseases, homicide and accidents, cancer, infant mortality, chemical dependency (measured in deaths due to cirrhosis of the liver) and diabetes.

The research revealed that black Americans have the highest rates of cardiovascular disease in the world, and that homicide is the second greatest cause of excess deaths for blacks. The rates of cancer and infant mortality and diabetes are also much higher for blacks than for whites

and other minority groups, according to the Task Force study.

Yet the research also revealed that every one of those causes of excess deaths were aggravated by socioeconomic and cultural risk factors. "Though not a panacea, health education has been effective in increasing public awareness about actions individuals and communities can take to enhance personal health," the report noted. "Because many of the identified behavioral and environmental risk factors associated with the causes of excess deaths among minorities can be controlled, more work is needed to educate minority populations about the risk factors for the six areas identified as having the greatest impact on minority health."

Smokin' & drinkin': In addition to propagating information about proper nutrition, black leadership should also become more active in the effort to halt the inordinately high rates of cigarette smoking and socially sanctioned consumption of alcohol in the African-American community. While presidential candidate Jackson and those in the civil rights fraternity have eagerly jumped on the "just say no" bandwagon against illegal drugs, seldom do these leaders speak out against smoking and drinking—two practices with health consequences that far outweigh those posed by the relatively low levels of drug abuse.

In fact, some civil rights groups have even mounted protests against anti-smoking legislation, claiming such laws discriminate against blacks because they smoke more than whites. They have chosen to ignore the fact that blacks have higher incidence rates of tobacco-related cancers of the lung, esophagus, pancreas and stomach. Smoking also seems to increase the risk of cardiovascular disease mortality.

Last year the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism called alcohol abuse "the No. 1 health problem in the black community." The rates of cirrhosis of the liver and esophageal cancer greatly exceeded the rates at which whites suffer these diseases. Other alcohol-related ills, such as violent crime and accidents, also affect blacks (particularly males) disproportionately.

According to a study entitled "Marketing Booze to

INSIDE STORY

Blacks" prepared by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, a Washington, D.C.-based non-profit organization that promotes public health policies, the devastating effects of alcohol use and abuse on the black community has largely been ignored; despite "high levels of alcohol problems, blacks have become a special market for alcohol producers. Advertising targeted at blacks, frequently utilizing the insights of black-run advertising agencies, employs all media, with particular emphasis on radio, black-oriented magazines and inner-city billboards." One consequence of these heavy advertising expenditures, the report noted, "has been the unwillingness of revenue-dependent black publications to report on risks associated with alcohol use and abuse."

Moreover, the pamphlet added, since alcohol companies are active in the sponsorship of many black civic events and are generous contributors to black community organizations and scholarship funds, many black leaders are beholden to these corporations. "In return for accepting the contributions, they are forced to abstain from taking effective action to reduce alcohol problems in the black community and to acquiesce in alcoholic beverage company marketing efforts designed to increase black drinking."

The lack of attention to the health needs of black Americans is one of black leadership's most grievous failings. The loss of a powerful public figure like Harold Washington leaves a gaping wound in a community already handicapped by a lack of effective role models. Ignoring the fact that he hastened his departure by disregarding clear risk factors in his lifestyle bypasses what may be Washington's most profound, though posthumous, message to the black community.

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Would long-range arms treaty be a false START for peace?

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

LAST WEEK'S SUMMIT MEETING BETWEEN President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov has created new momentum toward a U.S.-Soviet agreement on long-range nuclear arms. According to the Reagan administration, such a "START" agreement would cut nuclear forces in half and lay the groundwork for the "total elimination" of nuclear weapons. But a new study produced for the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) by arms control specialists Robert S. Norris, William M. Arkin and Thomas B. Cochran suggests that in some ways the proposed START agreement may accelerate rather than reduce the arms race.

Although the START (Strategic Arms Reduction Talks) negotiations began in 1982, they didn't become productive until the November 1985 Geneva summit, when Reagan and Gorbachov agreed to focus on what was described as 50 percent cuts in nuclear weapons. Then at the October 1986 summit at Reykjavik and in a series of subsequent proposals, the Americans and the Soviets settled on the outlines of an agreement. Over seven years, it would reduce total missile warheads to 5,100 (Soviet proposal) or 4,800 (U.S. proposal) and total missile launchers to 1,600. As the Washington summit neared both sides appeared close to resolving major disagreements over "Star Wars" and the sublimits allowed for submarine and land-based missiles.

Norris, Arkin and Cochran believe that "on balance the pluses of a START treaty outweigh the minuses," but they think that the minuses are being overlooked and that the pluses are being exaggerated. They take issue with the way the treaty has been presented, and claim that the real reductions achieved under the American and Soviet proposals would be the following:

- the U.S. would reduce its strategic delivery vehicles from 2,000 to 1,600, or 20 percent, and the Soviet Union from 2,475 to 1,600, or 35 percent;
- the U.S. would reduce its ballistic missile warheads from 7,950 to 4,764, or 40 percent, and the Soviet Union from 9,400 to 4,800, or 49 percent;

- the U.S. would reduce its total warheads (including warheads on nuclear bombs) from 13,000 to 9,000, or 30 percent, and the Soviet Union from 11,000 to 7,000 or 36 percent.

Whether the arms race speeds or slows does not depend necessarily on the number of launchers and warheads, but rather on the kinds of weapons being introduced. During the Reagan administration's first seven years, the arms race accelerated—new weapons were deployed and plans for Star Wars were introduced—but the number of warheads actually declined by 3 percent.

As currently proposed, START would eliminate mobile land-based missiles like the MX and Midgetman, but would not restrict the modernization of any other weapons or the introduction of new weapons, like the Advanced Cruise Missile and Trident II submarine-launched missile. Indeed, most arms control observers expect that the ban on mobile missiles will be cut from the treaty.

START would also inspire a new generation of nuclear weapons. By reducing the number of missiles and warheads, START would fuel the race for super-accurate missiles with "single-shot kill probability" systems and "maneuvering re-entry vehicles" that could avoid missile defense systems.

It would not necessarily reduce the total "lethality" of U.S. and Soviet nuclear forces. Lethality is a product of megatonnage and accuracy. The more accurate a missile, the less megatonnage ordinarily required in order to destroy a target. As American nuclear forces have become increasingly accurate, they have reduced their megatonnage proportionately, until the total megatonnage is now a quarter of what it was in 1961. But in order to penetrate "hard targets," both the U.S. and Soviet Union have begun to increase megatonnage along with accuracy. As a result, Norris, Arkin and Cochran argue, American and Soviet forces might become even more lethal after START.

And a START agreement might not even save money. Nuclear weapons make up only 15 to 20 percent of the military budget. The elimination of nuclear weapons—many of which were destined for mothballs in the early '90s—will not dent the budget, and the product of new, more accurate and maneu-



The signing of the INF treaty may provide momentum for a long-range weapons pact.

verable weapons, even in reduced numbers, will keep the nuclear weapons budget at the same, if not a higher, level.

The authors do not suggest that the U.S. and Soviet Union would be better off without START. To the extent that the arms race could accelerate under START, it would grow even more quickly without any treaty. But the authors argue that with additional provi-

sions START could have a much more significant impact on arms control. These provisions include the kind of limits on ballistic missile flight testing and on nuclear tests favored by the peace movement and limits on new destabilizing weaponry like the sea-launched cruise missile. These measures would slow the race for more lethal weaponry. □

Intermediate weapons treaty rips apart the right

Conservative opponents of the INF treaty have tried to portray the president as a man held captive by White House "pragmatists." Reagan has become, according to Conservative Caucus Chairman Howard Phillips, "little more than the chief speech reader for the pro-appeasement triumvirate of [Chief of Staff] Howard Baker, [Secretary of State] George Shultz and [Secretary of Defense] Frank Carlucci." But the debate over the INF has divided not only Phillips and Baker, but also hard-line conservatives.

Among the presidential candidates, Vice President George Bush and Sen. Robert Dole back the treaty, and Rep. Jack Kemp, former Gov. Pierre S. du Pont IV and Rev. Pat Robertson violently oppose it. But Kemp's chief political adviser, former White House Political Director Ed Rollins, favors the treaty. "The vast majority of Americans think [the treaty] is very positive and that Reagan would not leave them in a weakened position. And I agree with them," Rollins told the *Washington Post*.

Conservative senators are divided, with Orrin Hatch, James McClure and Ted Stevens expected to back the treaty, while Jesse Helms and Steve Symms are expected to oppose it. According to current estimates, conservative opponents in the Senate will not be able to garner more than 15 votes.

Neo-conservative intellectuals who worked together on the Committee on the Present Danger in the late '70s and then for Reagan in 1980 and 1984 can't agree on the treaty. Jeane Kirkpatrick, Michael Novak and Richard Perle oppose it, but Irving Kristol and Paul Nitze favor it. The editors of *National Review* are split

over the treaty. Editor William F. Buckley Jr. called on Reagan to "abandon it," and the magazine itself has repeatedly editorialized against the treaty; but both publisher William Rusher and Washington editor John McLaughlin enthusiastically support it. On the eve of the summit, Rusher wrote, "Ronald Reagan's combination of patience, toughness and strategic vision is on the verge of making such grand strategists as Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger...look like they're still playing with rubber ducks in their bathroom."

Conservative disunity has strengthened the hand of the "Old Guard" and "Main Street" Republicans like Indiana Sen. Richard Lugar and Illinois Rep. Robert Michel. These Republicans are more concerned with deficits than with the demons of Cold War theology. Conservative opponents of the INF find themselves in the same position as those who opposed SALT and Nixon's China opening in 1972, when they backed the futile presidential candidacy of Rep. John Ashbrook against Nixon.

Reagan's summitry has probably strengthened Republican political prospects within the country by removing a source of public disquiet with Republican candidates. But if Reagan takes the next step and negotiates a START treaty with Gorbachov, the splits created by INF will deepen; and the Republican convention in New Orleans next summer could be the scene of ideological carnage. "If such a deal is cut," former White House Communications Director Pat Buchanan warned, "the GOP could come apart at the New Orleans conclave." —J.B.J.

Is President Reagan a born-again peacenik?

In his December 3 interview with network anchormen, President Reagan insisted that he had not changed his view of the Soviet Union. "I haven't changed from the time when I made a speech about an evil empire," he said. But in the rest of his interview and in his behavior toward Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachov, there is ample evidence that Reagan has changed.

In the interview he made two startling statements: First, he criticized conservative opponents of the INF treaty for believing that "war is inevitable" and, second, he exonerated Gorbachov for the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. It was a situation, Reagan said, that Gorbachov "inherited."

Reagan's characterization of conserva-

tive doctrine was apt. Indeed, conservatives have maintained that war with the Soviet Union has already begun—a position articulated in the '50s by *National Review* foreign policy columnist James Burnham, who titled his biweekly column "World War III." This secular view was augmented by a theological understanding of the Cold War as Armageddon, first enunciated in former Communist Whittaker Chambers' 1952 autobiography, *Witness*.

Over the last decade, the theological strain of Cold War conservatism has been reinforced by right-wing evangelicals like Jerry Falwell and Pat Robertson who believed—based on an arcane reading of the Bible—that Armageddon was imminent.

Continued on page 22

INSHORT

By Jim Naureckas

3,000 shoes and one suit

A federal judge has reinstated Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos as defendants in a civil suit charging them with ordering the 1981 assassinations of two Filipino labor leaders killed in Seattle. Earlier the Marcoses had been excluded from the suit, which stemmed from the murders of anti-Marcos longshoremen Gene Viernes and Silme Domingo, on the grounds that heads of state could not be sued in a U.S. court. But Judge Barbara Rothstein ruled last month that former heads of state are entitled to no such protection, and that in any case, head-of-state immunity does not extend "to acts of political terrorism or murder."

Uncle Tom's rec-room

The building that the novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was named for is now part of a suburban house in Rockville, Md., where it serves as a den.

Media-owned state

Australia has "the most concentrated media ownership in the world, excluding, of course, countries where the media is state-owned," writes Melbourne journalist Paul Chadwick in the monthly *Multinational Monitor*. Ninety-one percent of city newspaper circulation is owned by just two media groups, with two-thirds of circulation controlled by world-wide press baron Rupert Murdoch.

Go back where you didn't come from

Despite civil libertarians' objections, a U.S. District Court has upheld the State Department's decision to close the Palestine Information Office (PIO) in Washington, D.C. (see *In These Times*, Nov. 11). The office, an information and research bureau for the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), closed its doors on December 3. But Congress wants to go a step further. House and Senate negotiators agreed to an amendment to the State Department authorization bill that would close the PLO's observer mission at the United Nations as well. U.S. lawyers claim that closing the PLO mission would violate the agreement under which the international body established its headquarters in New York. And Arab nations are threatening to take the matter to the International Court of Justice in The Hague. Meanwhile, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) will argue the PIO's case before the U.S. Court of Appeals in late February.

White rights

In 1977 the Carter administration briefly considered closing the office of the white-minority-ruled Rhodesian government. Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC) argued against the move, claiming the U.S. public had a right to hear Rhodesia's point of view, no matter how unpopular. "It will be the American people who will lack the full and free debate that is guaranteed in the Constitution," said Helms. "It will be the American people who will have denied to them that which is rightfully theirs." Ten years later, Helms was a key sponsor of the legislation to shut down the Palestinian offices.

Taking leave of his senses

A pending U.S. House bill would give parents the right to an unpaid leave to care for newborn infants or seriously ill children or parents. The bill was watered-down in committee, but not enough for Cass Ballenger (R-NC). "Even diluted poison can kill," warned the congressman.

Loving the alien

NBC affiliates received 149 phone calls complaining that an interview with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachov had pre-empted the sit-com *All*.

Missile envy

Chicago Tribune columnist David Evans, explaining why the military supports removing Pershing II missiles from Europe, recently wrote, "Pershing II's...don't excite the...artilleryman's abiding passion for big guns.... Artillerymen are most happy when they can haul their guns out once a week or so and fire a few dozens shells downrange. They can't do that with nuclear-tipped Pershing missiles.... Training is a platonic affair that never consummates the artilleryman's lust for the explosion of 'cold steel on target.'"

LOOKS TO ME LIKE WORLD WAR THREE UNDERNEATH THE CHRISTMAS TREE....



"ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS," THE NEW IRS SINGLE FROM TIMBUK 3, IS IN ALL RADIO STATIONS AND RECORD STORES NOW. THE PROTEST AGAINST

Record sales for war toys: Pop group Timbuk 3 has its heart in the right place. It's right there on their sleeve—the record sleeve, that is. That's where you'll find the lyrics of the group's new single protesting the proliferation of weapons under the Christmas tree. Timbuk 3's dolorous, folksy plaint, "All I Want for Christmas (Is World Peace)" cautions that it "Looks to me like World War III underneath the Christmas tree." Indeed, 11 of the season's 20 best-selling toys (many linked to Saturday-morning cartoons) have violent themes. And sales of war toys have risen 700 percent since 1982 to create a billion-dollar industry. Timbuk 3 has given the topic an activist twist: proceeds from the record will go to the War Resisters League's Stop War Toys Campaign. For that reason alone it would be nice to see the song shoot up to the top of the charts—with a bullet.

Canadian labor movement spurns U.S.-based unions

Things other than the price of herring and cod are being discussed these days on the fishing wharves and fish plants of Newfoundland. A bitter battle between the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) and the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) over representation rights for 23,000 Newfoundland fishermen and fish-plant workers has rekindled a long-smoldering debate in the Canadian labor movement over the role of "international" unions.

The battle ignited last March, when Richard Cashin, president of the Fishermen's local, announced he was leading his membership out of the Washington D.C.-headquartered UFCW and into the CAW. The Fishermen's Union—as it is popularly known in Newfoundland—was formed in 1971, organizing some of Canada's most impoverished workers in the country's poorest province. Since then, the Fishermen's Union has developed into a social movement. It has challenged the long-held power of Newfoundland's fish merchant aristocracy and, in the process, has influenced the passage of social and labor legislation that is rapidly transforming a very traditional society.

The Fishermen's Union relied upon the UFCW for organizing help when it was first formed. But the relationship was never warm, as the Fishermen's Union—along with other Canadian UFCW affiliates—pushed unsuccessfully for greater Canadian autonomy.

The UFCW's philosophy has two problems, according to Rev. Desmond McGrath, a Newfoundland

parish priest who, along with Cashin, founded the Fishermen's Union. McGrath says the UFCW is "not geared toward Canadians making their own basic decisions. Secondly, it's a very highly mobilized dues-collection agency. The services just weren't there. They operated on numbers."

The Fishermen's Union's rupture with the UFCW has re-opened a public and often acrimonious debate within the Canadian labor movement over the conservative character of many U.S.-based unions operating in Canada. The UFCW, in particular, has been criticized in Canada as representing much of what is disliked about international unions. The UFCW in Canada is comprised of two regions of the union's North American operations, rather than as a single autonomous Canadian division. And it pays affiliation dues to the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)—the principal Canadian union organization—on only 57,000 of its 160,000 Canadian members, thus depriving the CLC of an estimated \$600,000 a year. Last year the UFCW provided uninspired leadership during a bitter six-month meat packers' strike in Edmonton, Alberta. In January it imposed a heavy-handed trusteeship upon a Vancouver, British Columbia, local, sending armed union officials from the U.S. to seize possession of the local's office, which had been involved in a jurisdictional dispute with another UFCW local.

Over the past 20 years the presence of U.S.-based unions in Canada has steadily declined. In 1965, more than 70 percent of Canadian union members belonged to an international union. Today, that percentage has dropped to 34 per-

cent. The most dramatic split by Canadian unionists from their U.S. parent occurred in 1985 and 1986, when the 140,000 members of the Canadian Auto Workers—embittered by headquarters' pressure to accept auto company concessions—broke with the United Auto Workers.

Adding fuel to the debate was the Canadian government's 1987 annual report on the status of the Canadian labor movement. It showed that in 1984—the latest reporting year—U.S. unions operating in Canada took in \$61 million (Canadian) more from their Canadian members than they spent. The report also stated that U.S.-based unions accounted for 81 percent of the trusteeships imposed by unions upon Canadian locals in 1984, although the U.S. unions represented only 40 percent of the Canadian union membership at the time.

The UFCW has launched a blizzard of legal actions to stall the CAW-Fishermen's Union merger. But it seems clear that the vast majority of the Fishermen's Union membership will opt for the CAW. Only one member of the 24-person executive committee of the Fishermen's Union opposed the breakaway, and even he has subsequently broken from the UFCW.

McGrath is confident that the move to a Canadian parent union will enable Newfoundland fishermen and fish-plant workers to confront the capital and technological changes now transforming the North Atlantic fishing industry. "They'll have their own council. The auto workers won't be making decisions for the fishermen. They'll be making them for themselves. It's a good strong union that is more closely allied with the principles of unionism."

—Michael Lynk

FBI discourages dissent, frowns on non-violence

PEORIA, ILL.—FBI agent John C. Ryan's life was violent. Every day he carried his .38-caliber, snub-nosed Colt revolver hidden in his belly holster. He filled his pistol with super-velocity, hollow-point bullets that expand when they hit flesh, causing maximum damage to their victims.

Late in 1986, after 21 years at the FBI and a religious conversion to non-violence, agent Ryan refused to conduct an FBI "terrorism" investigation of pacifists, including Vietnam veteran and anti-war activist S. Brian Willson. In response, the FBI fired Ryan this past August for refusing to conduct a lawful investigation.

A week after the FBI dismissed Ryan, Willson's legs were mangled when he was run over by a munitions train as he protested U.S. weapons shipments to Central America at the Concord Naval Weapons Station in California.

Ryan's dismissal from the bureau is the latest in a series of events that indicate dissension within the FBI over its "domestic security/terrorism" probes of political activists. Now Congress is questioning the FBI about Ryan's dismissal, and its application of "terrorist" guidelines to peaceful protesters, according to Rep. Don Edwards (D-CA), who oversees the FBI for the House Judiciary Committee.

Ryan "had no other desire in life," he says, but to join the FBI, which he did in 1966. He investigated organized crime. "My career was all important. My family was secondary. I worked with violent people."

In his recent appeal to get his job back, Ryan wrote to FBI Assistant Director Edwin J. Sharp that he "personally developed and operated nine top-echelon informants" in organized crime. But it was that befriending of an underworld figure that changed his perspective.

"That informant pointed out my values as suspect," Ryan remembers. Looking over activities of the FBI, Ryan found that FBI agents were submitting fraudulent time vouchers. "That's a felony," Ryan observes. "I discovered there's a human side of bad guys and a criminal side of good guys."

Ryan followed the example of his wife and began attending Bible classes, reading scripture for himself instead of just listening to sermons. He began to question his values and to adopt a philosophy of non-violence.

Finally Ryan's job and his conscience clashed. In November 1986, FBI Special Agent Bobby J. Grooms, according to an FBI memo, requested that Ryan contact local police and "other sources" to discover if there had been any incidents in Peoria like the vandalism at 11 military recruiting stations in Chicago the previous month.

In response to one broken window and several broken locks, the

Chicago FBI Terrorism Task Force opened a 90-day preliminary investigation into "an organized conspiracy to use force/violence to coerce the United States government into modifying its direction." The vandals left behind leaflets that credited the peace group Veterans Fast for Life with inspiring the anti-military acts.

According to Ryan and an FBI teletype, the FBI investigation into the vandalism included the veteran group and its founder, S. Brian Willson. The FBI teletype concluded that the conspiracy was "probably nationwide."

"These aren't terrorists," Ryan says. "Eleven locks, one window, maybe you're talking about \$1,000 damage." Ryan knew the terrorism label could mean serious prison terms for the offenders.

He decided he would investigate the crime as damage to government property—not as a terrorism investigation. "The politics of the group influenced the FBI to probe an act of vandalism as a terrorist investigation," Ryan says.

He then dictated a memo to his boss stating that he refused to conduct a terrorism investigation of people he knew to be peaceful.

On June 10, 1987, Sharp, the FBI

assistant director, wrote to Ryan to advise him that "strong consideration was being given to 'dismissing you from the rolls of the FBI for...insubordination.'" Sharp gave Ryan "an opportunity to rectify the matter."

In reply, Ryan—who planned to retire in 1988—asked that he be allowed to serve out his last 11 months at the bureau. "I do not want to be fired and denied my pension," he wrote, but "I would be disloyal if I did not act as I did."

On Aug. 25, 1987, FBI Executive Assistant Director for Administration John D. Glover sent Ryan a letter of dismissal that said, "While I appreciate your personal conviction, I find your conduct totally unacceptable."

Ryan, however, concludes that, "We, the FBI, as an internal arm to quell dissent, are absolutely essential to perpetuate unjust, immoral and terrorist activities in other countries. If I were to have worked the S. Brian Willson case, I'd have been in complicity with what our government is doing in Central America."

—Angus Mackenzie

A version of this story appeared in National Catholic Reporter.

The FBI fired John Ryan for not treating protesters as terrorists.



What you don't know can't hurt you

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is cancelling the only program that measures how much toxic chemicals Americans are absorbing. The program, which measures chemicals found in human fat, has found most Americans carry at least 30 of 55 surveyed chemicals in their bodies, including PCB, dioxin, chloroform and DDT byproducts. The EPA says it will save \$1.2 million a year by cancelling the program.

Greetings from 60657-3278

So far, the U.S. Postal Service has spent more than \$1 billion implementing the nine-digit ZIP code now found on one out of every 17 letters.

Man of God

Despite complaints from American Indian groups that Father Junipero Serra's California missions brought mainly slavery, torture, rape and disease to the original inhabitants of California, progress continues in having Serra granted sainthood. The Catholic Church has exhumed Serra's body, one of the necessary steps on the way to canonization, and has announced that a nun was miraculously cured after praying to the 18th-century missionary.

...but maybe they'll make him a saint

Meanwhile, after a 20-year campaign, regents at Colorado University recently agreed to rename Nichols Hall, a dormitory named for Capt. David Nichols, a 19th-century Colorado politician who helped lead a notorious massacre of American Indians. In a report commissioned by the university, CU history professor Patricia Limerick wrote that Nichols "enthusiastically took part in a massacre on Nov. 29, 1864, at Sand Creek in which Indians' brains were knocked out, children's ears were cut off, and men and women's 'privates' were cut out and used as tobacco pouches or saddle ornaments."

Bug off

In the early '50s, according to Cornell entomologist David Pimentel, insects destroyed 7 percent of U.S. agricultural production. Over the past 35 years, Pimentel says, pesticide use has increased 10-fold—and insect crop damage has nearly doubled.

Career opportunities

Last month Robert Watkins, the Reagan administration's top automobile trade official, became the latest Reaganite to step down under fire. Watkins, while still a deputy assistant secretary of commerce, had circulated a resume to Honda, Toyota and Nissan offering his services as a lobbyist against "protectionist and xenophobic political action." His chief qualification: he had recommended that the president "end the request to the Japanese government for voluntary export restraint on automobiles." After Watkins' resignation, Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) commented: "I can now understand why he was such a weak negotiator."

San Francisco shake-up

Art Agnos received 70 percent of the vote December 8 in a run-off election for mayor of San Francisco. With a well-organized grass-roots campaign, Agnos defeated John Molinari, who was supported by real estate interests (see *In These Times*, Oct. 21 and Nov. 11). Agnos is expected to promote gay rights, rent control and curbs on development, although his administration will be hampered by a large budget deficit left by outgoing Mayor Dianne Feinstein.

Late-breaking bull

"The same outlook that makes bonds attractive works for stocks as well," writes Larry Biehl in the fall 1987 *Stanford Magazine*. "Add to that an abundance of liquidity, better-than-projected corporate earnings growth, and a shrunken supply of equities due to takeovers and buybacks, and you have the ingredients for a continuing bull market—believe it or not!"

Original articles, news clips, memos, press releases, reports, anecdotes, raw gossip—send them all to "In Short," c/o *In These Times*, 1300 West Belmont, Chicago, Ill. 60657. Please include your address and phone number.



Ambassador Carlos Tunnerman of Nicaragua addresses the convention of the Democratic Socialists of America. Joining him on the podium are, from left to right, former Prime Minister Michael Manley of Jamaica, Guillermo Ungo, president of the confederation of El Salvador's left opposition parties, and Ron Daniels, director of the National Rainbow Coalition.

POLITICS

Opportunity knocks—can left answer?

By Joel Bleifuss

WASHINGTON

"JACKSON TO SHUN SOCIALIST BACKING," announced the *New York Times* as 201 socialists gathered here on December 4 for the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) biennial convention.

Having read the article, Jesse Jackson called Michael Harrington, DSA co-chair, socialist author and sometime adviser to the candidate. Saying the report was "an attempt to split the movement," Jackson told Harrington he would welcome DSA support for his candidacy. The next day's headline read: "Jackson seeking socialist backing." Although DSA welcomed this attention, identification with the "s-word" was perhaps not the best plug for the Jackson campaign.

The curse of the s-word: Only in the U.S. would a candidate for national office think of shying away from an endorsement by what is, as the *New York Times* says, "the nation's leading socialist organization." Although the American political scene has its homegrown variety of Europe's liberal and conservative parties—the Democrats and the Republicans—the U.S. is unique among Western democracies in lacking a viable socialist party. It is a political void that DSA hopes one day to help fill.

But for 5,000 members of DSA that goal is more than a few sights down the road. Most immediately the organization is coping with the problem of holding itself together without the active presence of Harrington—the group's most prominent representative and most important fund-raiser. Harrington followed the convention from New York where he's convalescing following chemotherapy treatments for cancer.

DSA was formed out of the 1982 merger of the new-left oriented New American Movement (NAM) and the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC), a group that had its roots in the Socialist Party of Eugene

Debs and Norman Thomas. Now, five years later, DSA believes the right's demise is giving it an opportunity to present a socialist alternative.

In her keynote address to the convention, DSA co-chair Barbara Ehrenreich, a socialist-feminist author, summed up the current state of the nation: "The fair right is finished, Reagan is in ruins and capitalism is in trouble." The monied class, supply-sided with newly acquired wealth, gambled their riches. They lost, according to Ehrenreich, as did the record number of Americans who live in poverty. The moral, said Ehrenreich: "The rich can't be trusted with money."

She then laid out a broad three-point agenda to "reclaim what has been lost and repair what has been damaged." First, a "redistribution of wealth downward." Second, protection of the poor who have suffered the "anarchy of the market." Third, establishing an economy that is based on "democratic planning from the grassroots up." The end of the Reagan era, said Ehrenreich, offers the left an opportunity for "new boldness and clarity of vision."

Two visions: At the convention two groups emerged with differing visions of how DSA should take advantage of this political opening—the "Socialist Agenda" and the "Socialist Unity" caucuses. Three central issues divided the two groups: what the relationship between the local chapters and the national office should be, what DSA's political strategy should be, and whether DSA's official leaders should be permitted to criticize revolutionary governments—specifically Nicaragua.

In the last three years DSA has suffered a 40 percent drop in membership and has seen several formerly strong local chapters fold. The Socialist Agenda delegates laid part of the blame on what they saw as an ineffective national DSA leadership that failed to cultivate local growth. "Our locals are still dropping like flies," said the Socialist Agenda

statement of purpose. "DSA's future lies in the strength of its locals.... We regard the loss of our locals as a crisis demanding the firmest possible action."

Those in Socialist Unity responded that the decline in membership can be explained as the natural fallout from the dismal Reagan years. They argued that from 1984-86 all national left organizations lost membership. Said the Socialist Unity group: "We have survived a conservative era in our nation's politics, but we have nonetheless sustained real losses—in resources, numbers, morale. The most destructive non-debate we see is that between building our locals and building the national organization. The two tasks are essentially one and the same."

Right or left? The difference between the two caucuses' political strategies could roughly be characterized as a disagreement over whether DSA should look to its left or its right for political support.

The Socialist Agenda, ready to forsake DSA's allegiance to the Democratic Party, argued: "work with the Rainbow Coalition should be DSA's main area of domestic work.... More and more, the Rainbow Coalition represents much of the real left within the Democratic Party.... [R]eform pursued through purely electoral means militates against the organization of mass pressure on the state."

The Socialist Unity supporters countered that "mass pressure" can only grow out of a broad movement of the people on the democratic left, most of whom have their political home in the Democratic Party. Said Socialist Unity, "Our strategy centers on building coalitions among all the constituencies for progressive change," with the eventual goal being a majority movement for democratic socialism.

The Jackson endorsement was one of the few things that united both caucuses at the convention. According to a DSA poll, 51 percent of its members support Jackson, 20 per-

cent favor Sen. Paul Simon and 6 percent are for Gov. Michael Dukakis. Although several DSA delegates, some of whom are intimately connected to the Simon campaign, dissented, the endorsement went smoothly. "We handled that mission in a model fashion," said Harrington in an interview. "Some are unhappy, but they will not walk. That shows an organization that can deal with political problems and really act."

To criticize or not to criticize? The clearest example of sectarianism at the gathering was around the issue of "critical support of" versus "solidarity with" Nicaragua. DSA has friendly relations with the socialist movements in Latin America. Nonetheless, some DSA leaders have criticized Sandinista policies.

"Criticism of the revolutionary movements has been done in a hasty and largely unanalyzed fashion," said the Socialist Agenda statement of purpose. To correct that situation, some members of that caucus offered a resolution to prohibit official representatives of DSA from criticizing the "revolution process as it has occurred so far in Nicaragua." The measure failed.

Socialist Unity, which was organized in response to the Socialist Agenda statement, argued, "DSA will be stronger if we are all less concerned with telling others what they should be doing and more concerned with what we each can do to build our movement."

Socialist Agenda and Socialist Unity both ran candidates for the Executive Committee, the 24-member body that guides DSA between national elections. The Socialist Unity slate, with the support of about 65 percent of the convention vote, picked up about 18 of those seats; Socialist Agenda, with 15 percent, got 1 position and the remaining 25 percent of the delegates and those belonging to an unaffiliated, unorganized middle group took about 5 seats.

DSA's leaders made a point at the convention to encourage open debate. "Political discussion in DSA has been stagnant," said Ehrenreich, who prescribed "polemical zest" laced with tolerance.

Jim Chapin, former Democratic Socialists Organizing Committee (DSOC) political director and Socialist Unity supporter, urged DSA members not to exaggerate their differences. Writing in the internal discussion bulletin *Socialist Forum*, he observed: "This is a particularly silly time to let bad feelings get out of hand because things are moving in our direction in the nation for the first time since about 1965, and in organizational terms since about 1982. Our most profound internal differences, in the present political climate, amount to variations in the leftmost 1 percent of the population."

A time for action: But the question remains whether DSA will be able to take advantage of the current political situation and move from obscurity to the national political arena.

Some are betting it will not. As one neo-conservative pundit recently observed, "The left has a big fat pitch coming over the center of the plate. Being the left they will probably miss it."

The challenge is not going unnoticed. As delegate Dave Rathke, a National Education Association (NEA) organizer from St. Louis, said, "DSA's been on a plateau. We either get it together or pack it up and go. This organization could linger on forever." □

By Kathryn Phillips

LOS ANGELES

IT ISN'T ALWAYS EASY TO UNSELFISHLY LOVE THE California desert. It holds many temptations that make simple appreciation difficult. Miners, for instance, can't shake the feeling that beneath much of the 25-million-acre region lie vast mineral fortunes. Motorcyclists and off-road vehicle riders, on the other hand, couldn't care less about borates or iron. These people are happiest in the desert when they can carve tracks into delicate desert topsoil.

In coastal California city officials view the desert as some giant aspirin tablet for their urban headaches. Where should they dump their garbage and toxic wastes now that their own local canyons are filled? The sparsely populated desert, they would love to believe, could be the remedy.

Ranchers like the desert for the forage it offers their cattle. Rock hounds want it for the geodes and rocks they can add to their collections or sell in their shops.

There is, it seems, no shortage of people who love the desert for the ways they can change it, use it and destroy it. And that is a key reason environmentalists have made the California Desert Protection Act a national legislative priority, right up there with the Clean Air Act and offshore drilling battles.

About the act: The California Desert Protection Act would expand and give national park status to Death Valley National Monument and Joshua Tree National Monument. A third national park would also be established south of Death Valley in the East

The California Desert Protection Act's biggest foe is lack of interest.

Mojave Desert. In addition, the act would make wilderness areas of about 4.5 million acres of federal land now questionably managed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The legislation would also protect a habitat for an endangered desert flower and prevent destruction of some sacred Indian lands (see accompanying story). All together, about 7.5 million acres of new park lands and wilderness would be established.

Most major environmental groups in the country, along with dozens of local nature and wildlife organizations, have lined up to push the act. They complain that the BLM hasn't done enough to protect sensitive areas in the desert as required by other federal legislation. Also, they say the Desert Protection Act is the logical next step in wilderness conservation in the West, where many forests, rivers and mountain meadows have already been protected.

Though Sen. Alan Cranston (D-CA) introduced the act in 1986—an election year for him—the real push in Congress began this past July when the first round of Senate subcommittee hearings were held. Significantly, California's Republican senator, Pete Wilson, has not taken a position on the act as he approaches his first bid for re-election. One announced opponent in that race, Democratic Lt. Gov. Leo McCarthy, testified in favor of the act at the July hearings.

"A test of leadership": Staying neutral could prove to be a bad move by Wilson, who was one of the first GOP officials in the state to tap environmental votes. Polls suggest he can't afford to lose much support

CALIFORNIA

The California Desert Protection Act would expand and give national park status to Death Valley National Monument.

Desert needs love—and legal protection

and still retain his seat. Environmentalists feel Wilson's endorsement of the act could make a huge difference in its acceptance by less-interested senators from other states.

"This is going to be a major test of his leadership and his commitment to public lands and wise stewardship of public lands," says Patricia Schifferle, the Wilderness Society's regional director for California and Nevada.

The Desert Protection Act faces predictable opposition from a broad range of desert users and abusers—miners, rock hounds, ranchers, off-road vehicle drivers and a number of desert towns.

"From recreation's perspective, the single key issue is loss of access," says Marie Brashear, a lobbyist for a coalition of rock hounding, hunting and off-road vehicle

groups that oppose the act, even though it will leave open most legal existing off-road vehicle sites.

Accessibility is also at the heart of opposition to the act from mining interests. The legislation's proponents respond that the wilderness boundaries have been drawn so that no "currently producing commercial mining operations" would be affected. Mining industry officials say that isn't enough. They want to be able to mine any claim—on publicly owned land—at a moment's notice.

Selling sand: But perhaps more dangerous for the Desert Protection Act than the organized opposition is the disorganized lack of interest. The legislation has, so far, received little media attention outside of desert communities. Moreover, the desert itself is a difficult product to sell. In past bat-

tles to establish wilderness areas and parks in California, environmentalists have been able to sell their ideas by tapping the public's easy recognition of the aesthetic value of snow-capped mountains, tall evergreens and redwoods, rushing rivers and rocky coastline. The typical desert images is less familiar and perhaps less romantic.

Most people see the desert only from a car, and know little about its wildlife, its hidden canyons with running water and hundreds of palm trees, its bighorn sheep and its towering sand dunes. Few realize how delicate the California desert is—and how much would be lost if it were destroyed.

The challenge for environmentalists now will be to illuminate the often-hidden beauty and romance of the desert, and stir up a little unselfish love. □

Saving a desert paradise from becoming a parking lot

PALM SPRINGS, CALIF.—On the edge of Palm Springs, only minutes from the main street of upscale shops and resort hotels, sits one of the most accessible—and most threatened examples of the surprises the California desert holds. Here, in the shadow of hills and mountains, native palm trees stand like bushy umbrellas shading a series of three canyons. Two streams run through the area and one forms a small oasis where about six pairs of rare birds make their home.

Nearby lies a low, meatloaf-shaped hill considered sacred by the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. For hundreds of years the Indians were the only people living here. Their ancestors are buried throughout this area and archeological signs of their early village life are abundant.

All together, this unusual property spans about 18,000 acres and includes the largest desert palm oasis in the country. The area's ownership is divided in a checkerboard pattern among the Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Forest Service, the Cahuilla tribe and individual members of the Agua Caliente band.

If a local developer is allowed to continue his plans, the rolling, scrub-covered 490-acre entrance to these canyons will be flattened. One stream will be diverted and an 18-hole golf course, a 250-room hotel and a 295-unit residential subdivision will be built on land leased from some member of the Agua Caliente Band. The sacred hill will sit in the middle of the development, preserved but isolated from its context.

A lot of people in Palm Springs, including more than a few of the 248 members of the Agua Caliente Band, are upset about these plans.

"The values of this area are incredible and it should be preserved for everybody, not just a few people who have a couple of million dollars to buy a house," says Gary Gray, chairman of the three-year-old Friends of Indian Canyons. The group was formed to battle development plans in the area.

Under the California Desert Protection Act (see accompanying story), the 490 acres of land owned by the individual band members would be traded for other

BLM land. Then the threatened land would be turned over to the Agua Caliente Band to be held in trust, forever free of development threats.

So far, the idea has not been embraced by the Agua Caliente tribal council. It believes the act needs more guarantees that the individual Band members who now own the land get fairly compensated in the trade. Sen. Alan Cranston has promised the tribe that he will continue to include a plan to preserve the canyons only if it meets the tribe's approval.

Environmentalists, meanwhile, are hoping to get a statewide bond issue placed on the June ballot that would include \$19 million to buy and preserve as much of the total canyon area as possible, especially the threatened entrance land.

The fight over the canyons is also expected to play a role in spring mayoral elections in Palm Springs. Only one mayoral candidate so far has expressed enthusiasm for the developer's plans. Get ready for this one. The candidate is entertainer Sonny Bono.

—K.P.

By William Gasperini

MANAGUA

"ASK ONLY FOR MORE FLEXIBILITY FROM both the government as well as the 'resistance' out of love for this people," intoned Nicaragua's powerful Cardinal Miguel Obando y Bravo in a sermon December 6, "people who deserve better treatment, in stopping this river of blood in Nicaragua."

Less than 36 hours earlier Obando had returned from the Dominican Republic where he mediated the first-ever "talks" between Nicaragua's Sandinista government and the U.S.-backed contras. After separate meetings with each side over two days, Obando announced that hopes for a cease-fire were at a "dead point." Although both sides expressed interest in seeking peace under the Esquipulas II plan, the meeting quickly reached an impasse over timing and the scope of demands presented.

Obando had arrived in the Caribbean nation armed with his own proposal for two goodwill truces to mark the important December 8 festival of the Immaculate Conception and Christmas. The proposal also contained opposition demands for a general amnesty and the lifting of the state of emergency in force since March 1982. The Nicaraguan government had already agreed to both of these demands on November 5, but repeated that they would take effect only if U.S. aid to the contras ceases and the rebels stopped using the territory of neighboring countries.

Contra condition: The contra delegation in turn agreed to these terms, but brought the talks full circle with a condition of their own, demanding that the Sandinistas must agree to an "irreversible" process of democratization by taking steps contained in the rebels' original proposal. These steps include abolition of the military draft, dissolution of neighborhood Sandinista Defense Committees, suspension of food ration cards, gradual disarmament of both sides into a "joint national army" and repatriation of foreign advisers.

The day the Dominican meetings began President Daniel Ortega characterized these

Sandinista-contra talks arrive at a 'dead point'



NICARAGUA

Ortega and Obando: Talks with contras failed to produce a cease-fire.

demands as political and said they came from the "most right-wing sectors of the Reagan administration," which, he said, was the real party in the negotiations. "If they want a cease-fire, then the U.S. has the word, because it is they who are waging the war," Ortega said. He also reaffirmed Managua's insistence on discussing only conditions for a cease-fire, saying political demands lie beyond the peace plan's scope.

As the meeting ended, Obando once again pressured for more flexibility, and said he would try to convince the Sandinistas to accept direct talks as the only real way to achieve results. The government, however,

said it would only meet face-to-face with the Reagan administration.

The opposition also joined the influential cardinal's call for the next round of talks in mid-December to occur in Central America. Originally the Dominican talks were to take place in Costa Rica, but Managua objected, saying that the contra presence in the other Central American countries violates the peace plan's prohibition of activities by "irregular forces."

Before the meeting top contra leaders sought to force their way back to Managua to present their proposals personally to Cardinal Obando. The government denied them

permission to return unless they came under an amnesty for contras who wish to surrender. Managua accused the rebels of seeking publicity.

The contras ultimately agreed to the Santo Domingo meeting "out of deference" to the cardinal, but signalled their displeasure by sending what government representative Deputy Foreign Minister Hugo Tinoco called a "third-rate" delegation.

National dialogue: The opposition maintains, contrary to the Sandinistas' position, that a cease-fire cannot be divorced from issues of political substance. But the Sandinistas say the only place for political considerations is during a "national dialogue," which also appears close to an impasse.

After two months of discussing internal rules and an agenda, 14 political parties and factions presented the government with demands for constitutional reforms just before the Dominican meeting. These include limiting presidential succession and executive power over the national budget and selection of judges.

Government resistance to reform is strong, however, especially because the constitution was adopted only last year after a two-year process. But with extra-parliamentary political groups also participating in the dialogue, the democratization issue is center-stage.

The Sandinistas responded by asking for time to study the possible reforms. The opposition groups promptly charged that this would delay legislative consideration of the changes until next year's National Assembly session, scheduled to begin in February.

"The fundamental objective of the dialogue is to reach agreement between the opposition and the government to democratize Nicaragua," said Julio Garcia Vilchez, who represented the 14 groups. "This can happen only by approving these reforms before December 21 when the Assembly session ends."

The parties, ranging from several ultra-conservative groups to the Socialists and Communists, threatened to call off further dialogue unless the government responded affirmatively.

The Sandinistas' original cease-fire proposal, drawn up in Washington with the help of House Speaker Jim Wright (D-TX), called for the rebels to disarm and join the dialogue either by reintegrating into the existing "unarmed" groups or by forming a new party.

"This will open political space in which they can participate in the country's political life as an opposition group," said President Ortega.

But the contras categorically reject this "space," calling the offer to pursue "la via civica" (the civic route) tantamount to surrender. And after so many years of warfare, they are unlikely to switch to unarmed pressure as another opposition group.

Despite the failure of the Dominican meeting, government representative Tinoco called the sessions positive and a step in a long process. The war, however, continues unabated.

With the failure of the truce, the momentum of the regional peace plan slowed just as its author, Costa Rican President Oscar Arias, journeyed to Oslo, Norway, to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. As Arias repeated his call for more flexibility in Nicaragua, he also noted that cease-fires had not been achieved in El Salvador or Guatemala.

Contras speak: "The war is impossible for Americans to understand"

SAN JOSE, COSTA RICA—Representatives of the self-proclaimed "Nicaraguan Resistance" continue to toe the standard line on Nicaragua. The following are excerpts of these positions from a conversation with contra spokesperson Orion Pastora at the office of the Resistance in San Jose:

- The contra fight is genuine and not "mercenary," as charged by the Sandinistas. "Washington has nothing to do with the matter. What we are doing is fighting against the mercenaries who are already in Nicaragua, all the Cubans, Russians and other internationalists now there. These are the mercenaries, the foreigners paid to fight in another country. We aren't foreigners—we're Nicaraguans."

- But aid from the U.S.? "They [the Sandinistas] received help from the U.S. in the fight against Somoza (logistical aid, 'even money'). We do get assistance, but they receive much more from Cuba and the Soviet Union. Are they the only ones who can receive help?"

- The Sandinistas merely replaced one atrocious dictatorship with another, one controlled by "international commu-

nism." "We agree the fight against Somoza was legitimate. But our struggle is also just, in fighting against another government of terror that took over. We are also against the *internacionalistas*, including even Americans, Germans, [working for the government] who drink, eat and live off the blood of Nicaraguans."

- Contras are not stationed in neighboring countries. "All our fighters are inside Nicaragua. The only Nicaraguans in Honduras are those civilians living in concentration camps which the Sandinistas themselves cause to exist due to their policies. The only 'irregular forces' in Central America are the Libyans, Cubans and other terrorists in Nicaragua and El Salvador."

- Stories of contra atrocities are exaggerated and manipulated by the Nicaraguan government to confuse international opinion. "When they talk about children and civilians killed, you have to check who is reporting these things. Which journalists go? Have you actually seen our fighters kill innocent people? War is war, *amigo*, and it is the Sandinis-

tas who bomb villages, take pictures and say it was our forces. Helicopters don't shoot flowers, you know."

- What about the well-documented attacks on cooperatives? "You mean the military cartels they call cooperatives? [referring to rural farms and co-ops usually defended by civilian militias]. These are all military bases. This is just like Vietnam, when North American soldiers often had to kill civilians to defend themselves. This war is impossible for Americans to understand—you are so easily convinced by what they say. Our troops have actually died rather than allow women and children to be killed."

- The Sandinistas have only agreed to the regional peace plan due to a fundamentally weak position. "They are weak economically, militarily and morally, even with all their tanks, planes and arms. They will talk and talk, for example in the national dialogue, but only employ diversionary tactics to deceive public opinion. They think they can trick the political parties, but they won't be able to."

—W.G.

By Anne-christine d'Adesky

PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI

THIS TIME THE WRITING WAS LITERALLY ON the walls: "ABA KEP-VIVE L'AME!" (Down with the Provisional Electoral Council—Long live the army!). Yet few in this Caribbean nation were prepared for the election-day carnage that accompanied Haiti's first attempt at a presidential poll in 30 years.

From mid-afternoon November 28 to the following afternoon, Haiti's ruling three-man military junta, which includes a token civil-

HAITI

lian, seized control of the country, using terror tactics to stamp out the fledgling democratic process. The all-out assault on civilians put a cap on what is now being perceived by many Haitians as a calculated strategy by the military to regain total control of the country without resorting to a coup.

Instead, the ruling National Government Council (CNG) let a dedicated band of assassins do its dirty work, arming a small group of henchmen loyal to ousted dictator Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier with sophisticated weaponry and setting them loose on the population. After at least 34 persons lay dead and 67 wounded in the streets of the capital, the army placidly mopped up the blood, then blamed the mess on the nine-man Provisional Electoral Council (CEP), whose members quickly took to hiding when the CNG dissolved the group on November 29. When several of the loyalists paraded in the streets of Jeremie the next day, the citizens could only shake their heads in disbelief at the nightmare they were witnessing.

Beacon of hope: The cancellation of Haiti's elections and the dissolution of the one group that represented democracy, the CEP, should not have taken Haitians so much by surprise. To understand why they ignored the warnings, one must examine their deter-

The ruling National Government Council let a dedicated band of assassins do its dirty work. After at least 34 persons lay dead, the army blamed the mess on the Provisional Electoral Council.

mination to overcome 30 years of dictatorship and emerge a democratic nation. The November 29 election was a beacon urging them on even as their old enemies resurfaced—enemies determined to drag Haiti back to the days of terror under the Duvalier father-and-son dynasty. Even when citizens began dropping like flies on election day, the people's spirit did not waver: they dodged the bullets and got back in line to vote.

"We were warned about this with the assassination of presidential candidate [Louis] Eugene Athis," said Jean-Claude Bajoux, a prominent member of the grassroots coalition called Committee of 57. "We just didn't want to believe it could happen."

Athis, a centrist candidate, and two aides were stoned and dismembered by a band of

Les Stone Impact Visuals



An exercise in futility: Haitian women wait to vote on election day.

Bullets over ballots: an election terminated

the Duvalier loyalists known in Haiti as "Tonton Macoutes," a voluntary militia that ruled Haiti by terror under the Duvaliers. That was in early August. But the efforts of the CNG and the Macoutes to derail democracy began as early as the first days of their tenure.

From February 7 to May 1986, the CNG, led by strongman Lt. Gen. Henri Namphy, allowed dozens of notorious Duvalierists to slip out of Haiti and escape prosecution for their past activities. Later it forced out of office the token civilian cabinet members, replacing them with army officers who had been "Baby Doc" Duvalier's top henchmen. Finally, beginning late last year, Namphy began restructuring the military. He allegedly recruited many of the former 22,000 Macoutes, the notorious paramilitary force

that served as the Duvalier family's private militia. Many were incorporated into the recently formed Research Criminal Bureau, where they quickly began to crack down on suspected "subversives."

This past June Haitians got a glimpse of what Namphy might be planning in order to remain in charge. On June 30 the CNG seized control of the organization of the elections from the constitutionally mandated CEP, but was forced to back down 10 days later due to mass protests calling for the CNG's ouster.

That important victory gave the democratic forces and the CEP hope that they could temper Namphy's Napoleonic instincts by focusing on grassroots organizing. In addition, the many logistical obstacles to a national election required election officials to

choose between challenging Namphy's power plays or organizing the scheduled election. They pursued the second strategy until a week before the elections, when they fused both tactics. While armed civilian brigades battled the Macoutes, the CEP doubled its effort to distribute ballot boxes throughout the country.

Foreign role: Election officials also enlisted the help of the U.S. and Canada, among other countries. Unfortunately, that aid was costly in terms of the political price the CEP paid on election day when the CNG accused it of being manipulated by the U.S. For example, critics said that the CEP's acceptance of \$8.1 million in U.S. aid forced it to violate a constitutional clause forbidding anyone who had served under "Baby Doc" to run for office. Marc Bazin, a leading presidential candidate who briefly served in Duvalier's government and was considered the Americans' candidate, was nevertheless allowed to remain on the ballot. Of course, the CEP had to get the money somewhere, since the CNG wasn't forthcoming with election funds.

Continued on page 22

Death on deadline: Journalists become 'sitting ducks'

It was a war within a war. As Haitian citizens fell prey to armed militiamen during the recent debacle of Haiti's failed elections, journalists covering the events quickly became targets of grenade and automatic machine-gun fire.

A Dominican Republic reporter, Carlos Grullon, was killed on election morning. He, along with several other reporters, was confronted by gunmen who slaughtered 14 Haitians at a polling place. When the armed men began firing, the journalist stood up and waved his "Haiti elections" press card, then was shot at close range by the attackers.

Five other journalists suffered bullet wounds, and a Haitian driver for an American ABC network TV crew was killed by other attackers.

Journalists suffered minor scrapes jumping over walls as they fled attackers wielding machetes as well as UZI machine guns and other automatic weapons. There were numerous incidents of near-

fatalities, during which reporters' cars were badly damaged or equipment was stolen by attackers.

"This place is too weird." That was an often-repeated phrase used by members of the foreign press as they sat in the Holiday Inn Press Center in downtown Port-au-Prince and placed bets on whether the "Tonton Macoutes," or armed thugs, would invade the hotel. Many veteran correspondents of the wars in Lebanon and Central America claimed the Haiti elections were the most dangerous they had ever reported.

"In those places, when you're with one side, they've got arms and they'll watch out for you. Here, the Macoutes and the military have all the guns and we're sitting ducks," said a Reuters reporter.

Several hundred journalists arrived in Haiti the week before the election, few of them expecting the violence that greeted them as they tried to track down citizens' reports of bodies lying in the street. Typi-

cally, reporters formed small groups, venturing out in the early morning after listening to a solid night of gunshots and grenade explosions. But because the Macoutes were actually chasing any reporters they noticed in the streets, the situation became a cat-and-mouse game, with the media watching for cars spraying machine-gun fire or for army trucks, either one an inevitable harbinger of violence.

Many journalists refused to venture outside their hotels on election morning and boarded the first plane out. Others limited themselves to quick forays into neighborhoods when the shooting stopped.

Meanwhile, the Holiday Inn's telex room, with its large glass windows and prime location on a main strip, was an easy target for the Macoutes. "Watch your head," reporters would joke to ease the tension as they waited to file their reports, always keeping one eye on the street.

—A.C.D.

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this year added another 50,000 workers to its membership roles.

It wasn’t easy. Many times organizing the unorganized required picket lines, boycotts, and community pressure to convince employers to be truly neutral and let their workers make the decision themselves free from fear and coercion.

The UFCW also took its case to the public and the workers through innovative uses of the media, and extensively used polling techniques and other research to pinpoint workers’ concerns.

But many employers don’t stop fighting their workers’ desires to join a union even after the workers have made their choice in government-run elections. In fact, according to AFL-CIO figures, fewer than one-half of the workers involved in a victorious organizing election are ever covered by a union contract.

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William H. Wynn

William H. Wynn
International President



United Food & Commercial Workers
1775 K Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20006

By Harvey Morris

LONDON

IN LATE NOVEMBER FRANCE BLEW A LARGE HOLE in the already fragile facade of Western unity on the Persian Gulf crisis by carrying through a deal with the Iranians in which French hostages in Lebanon were released.

As part of an agreement to settle a five-month-old diplomatic wrangle, Iran pressured its friends in Beirut to release two Frenchmen, and France agreed, among other things, to supply a range of naval spare parts to help keep afloat the Iranian fast patrol boats used for attacking neutral shipping in the Gulf. It is the sort of deal, secretly negotiated behind the backs of allies, that President Reagan was after when he sent Oliver North and Robert MacFarlane to Iran.

It would be no surprise if the French now scale down their naval presence in the Gulf, where other allies are already showing signs of boredom with the phoney war. The Dutch and the Belgians are said to be so frustrated at not finding any mines that they are seriously considering going home. The British are becoming increasingly irritated about all the publicity surrounding the U.S. reflagging of Kuwaiti tankers and keep reminding everyone that the Royal Navy has been patrolling the Gulf for seven years without all this fuss.

The Gulf does not appear more or less safe than it did in July, before the reflagging operation began. Iraqi planes continue to bomb tankers carrying Iranian oil, and Iranian patrol boats continue to fire in retaliation on tankers carrying Iraqi oil. Iran, which originally feared that reflagging could be the cover for a large-scale land assault by the Americans, has decided that there is no such threat. For all the tough talk from Washington in July about protecting international sea lanes, it appears such protection applies only to reflagged Kuwaiti tankers and, even then, only when they are in international waters.

Reflagging was one hastily conceived element of a twin-track policy aimed at ending the war between Iran and Iraq, or at least ensuring that Iran did not win it. The other half of the policy—diplomatic action in the U.N. is not going well either, since the Soviets, despite the superpower *bonhomie* surrounding last week's summit, refuse to be bullied into supporting a one-sided arms embargo against Iran. Security Council resolution 598, calling for an immediate cease-fire in the war, remains unfulfilled and all the international posturing of the past four months has failed to bring Iran one step closer to the negotiating table.

But all is not lost: There are indications that after seven years of war, in which upward of 1 million people have died, Iran is at last contemplating a settlement, as long as it can get satisfactory terms. The war may be far from over, but it has reached the end game.

Since last summer Iran has pursued a twin-track policy of its own. The domestic leadership has maintained a "no compromise" line, threatening to pursue the war until the Baghdad regime is overthrown. But behind the scenes Iranian diplomats have been sounding out the prospects of a negotiated settlement that would acknowledge Iran's supremacy in the Gulf region.

When Iraq invaded Iran in 1980, President Saddam Hussein and most of the outside world thought the war would be over within a week and that victory would confirm him as the new master in the Gulf, filling the vacuum left by the deposed Shah of Iran. But



Iranian patrol boat: U.S. presence has apparently not made the Gulf more or less safe.

Although war lingers on, it's reached end game

seven years later, he now struggles for survival and is willing to make peace on almost any terms.

By contrast, the war has given Iran's clergy an excellent opportunity to consolidate their hold on the post-revolutionary regime, which is one reason why some are still not eager to see it end.

The successful expulsion of Iraq's invasion force was a considerable military feat, won at the cost of many tens of thousands of Iranian lives. But now the Iranian war machine appears to be running out of steam. A "final" offensive at the end of last winter failed to break through to its target, the southern Iraqi port of Basra, and the leadership has since been debating what to do next.

Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, the powerful speaker of the Iranian parliament, revealed in July that there were differences within the leadership over the future conduct of the war. He said there were those who favored a war of attrition against the Iraqis, while others were calling for yet one more "final" offensive. Speaking on the eve of the start of the reflagging operation, he warned that such attempts to pressure Iran would play into the hands of hardliners.

Iran is now going through the motions of preparing another offensive. Clerical leaders such as the president, Ali Khamenei, are donning military uniforms and touring the country urging civilians to enlist for the next big push. It is likely that some form of offensive will be mounted in the coming months. But its target will be as much diplomatic as military. Iran wants to show the U.N., and the superpowers in particular, that if better terms are not forthcoming for peace with Iraq, then the war will continue indefinitely.

The superpowers' role: Both the U.S. and the Soviet Union are determined that Iran should not win the war outright. Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Yuli Voronstov told the Iranians as much when he visited

Tehran in October. Reminding them that Moscow had a friendship and cooperation treaty with Baghdad, he said the Soviets would not allow an Iraqi defeat.

Despite this and the visceral anti-communism of Iran's Ayatollahs, the Soviets have made important advances this year in establishing better ties with Iran, and are now in the best position of any outsider to influence the war's outcome. Washington, thanks to the inept bungling of the Irangate operation, has destroyed all chances of opening a line to Iran and is reduced to thrashing around in the Gulf making ineffectual threats. If the idea of reflagging was to keep the Soviets out of the Gulf—one of the various motives put forward to justify the operation—then it appears to have had the opposite effect.

The fear now is that Washington will maintain its hard line against Iran in the U.N., if

Washington, thanks to the inept bungling of Irangate, has destroyed all chances of making ties with Iran and is reduced to thrashing around the Gulf making ineffectual threats.

only to deny Moscow the diplomatic victory of being seen to play a central role in bringing the war to an end.

Any delay in seizing the present opportunities for a diplomatic settlement would only lead to an unnecessary prolongation of the war. Now that the U.S. presidential campaign is underway, all major international initiatives are likely to go into deep freeze until President Reagan's successor is elected.

The Iranians have their own parliamentary elections to contend with next year, and failure to make progress toward a satisfactory diplomatic settlement of the war will work against the pragmatists such as Rafsanjani, who exercises his power through control of parliament. Hardline fundamentalists such as Interior Minister Hojatolislam Mohtashemi are already maneuvering to get their own people elected. Rafsanjani came under attack at an October meeting of the Students Following the Imam's Line—the inheritors of the group that held U.S. diplomats hostage in 1979-80—for going soft on the war.

The U.N. role: The current offer under the terms of Resolution 598 is an immediate cease-fire, a withdrawal of troops to international borders and the setting up of a commission to establish responsibility for the war. Iran's minimum condition for a cease-fire is the prior judgment of the commission that Iraq started the war. It also seeks payment of war reparations before it will withdraw from Iraqi territory.

The conditions are unacceptable to the Iraqis but could serve as a basis for further negotiations within the U.N. This, at least, is the hope of U.N. Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar.

The process is not helped by the presence of large numbers of foreign warships in the Gulf or by Washington's clear bias toward the Iraqis. The American presence will always give the Iranian leadership the opportunity to pinpoint the U.S. as the real enemy and thereby to revive waning popular support for the war, as happened last summer when reflagging began.

It is difficult to see how the Reagan administration could now withdraw the fleet without destroying what little credibility it has with the Arab world after Irangate. Most of the Gulf's Arab states, apart from Kuwait, did not want the Americans there in the first place. But now they are terrified by the prospect of a precipitate departure that would further upset the strategic balance in the Gulf.

A peace that recognized that Iran had effectively won the war and had now re-established itself as a regional superpower would seem to be the only alternative to more war. □

Harvey Morris is a London-based journalist.

IT'S PLAIN IN SPAIN U.S. BASES WILL REMAIN

By Diana Johnstone

MADRID

SPAIN'S GREAT POST-FRANCO AMBITION has been to become an integrated part of Western Europe while loosening the bilateral ties with the U.S. inherited from Franco. Socialist Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez got his compatriots to approve NATO membership in the March 1986 referendum only by promising "gradual reduction of U.S. military presence in Spain."

The main irony is that the U.S. has had no trouble rounding up the European NATO allies to pressure the Madrid government on behalf of the American military presence in Spain.

That presence amounts to the major Rota naval base near Cadiz on the southern coast and three major air bases, plus minor facilities. Franco granted the U.S. these bases back in 1953, to break out of his international isolation. After the referendum, Gonzalez' government began negotiations with the U.S. to write the promised reductions of U.S. military presence into a new bases treaty to replace the last one made in 1982.

The choice of diplomat Maximo Cajal to negotiate with the Americans on the bases makes the Spanish negotiating position look more serious than it may actually be. Spaniards opposed to the U.S. bases believe that Cajal is sincere. In January 1980, when Cajal was Spanish ambassador to Guatemala, a group of Guatemalan peasants sought asylum in his embassy. As a result, the Guatemalan army stormed the embassy, setting it on fire and killing 37 people, including two Spanish diplomats. Needless to say, the incident was quickly forgotten in a world being told

that the great atrocity of the age was the captivity of American diplomats in the U.S. Embassy in Tehran.

The Spanish right-wing press brands Cajal as "anti-American," figuring he can't be wildly pro-Yankee after that episode. He is facing Reginald Bartholomew, a tough career diplomat whose recent experience includes successfully negotiating a bases renewal agreement with Greece.

On November 14, after seven unproductive rounds of negotiation, the Spanish government formally notified the U.S. that the 1982 agreement between the two countries will not be automatically renewed in six months.

What will happen next? The U.S. media ignore foreign countries unless there is a crisis. On the face of it, this looked like enough of a crisis for the media to pay a little attention to Spain. ABC television declared that Spain would be the first allied country to "throw the Americans out."

A more realistic reaction came from Catalan leader Miguel Roca who stressed that "absolutely nothing is going to happen." Both governments are simply "playing their cards" before reaching an agreement.

Prime Minister Gonzales said plainly during a visit to Bonn last September that "we are discussing how they stay and not how they leave."

Enrique Curiel of the United Left noted that there is no timetable table for dismantling the U.S. bases, which is what the referendum implied.

Mariano Aguirre of the Centro de Investigacion para la Paz in Madrid points out that the Spanish government agrees with the U.S. that "Rota is not negotiable." This

is because it is "one of the most important bases the U.S. has in the world. So it is not questioned, even though its use by Sixth Fleet warships with nuclear weapons violates another point of Spanish policy confirmed in the 1986 referendum: the ban on nuclear weapons."

Rota has been described as "the basic nerve center of the whole U.S. nuclear deployment in the Mediterranean."

So leaving aside Rota, Gonzalez and his defense minister, Narcis Serra, concentrated on the 72 U.S. F-16 fighter-bombers stationed at Torrejon base near Madrid. Torrejon is the most unpopular of all the bases. The inhabitants hate the noise, and its proximity to Madrid is considered dangerous.

Indeed, the presence of a major U.S. base has no doubt put Madrid within the scope of Soviet missile targeting. Thus the U.S. bases create the "Soviet threat" that justifies their presence.

The Spanish government has fixed on those 72 planes as the "substantial reduction" that could satisfy Spanish public opinion and allow the Spanish-U.S. alliance to enter a new and happy era. But the U.S. would at first hear nothing of it.

Ambassador Reginald Bartholomew's best offer was to withdraw a third of the Torrejon fighter bombers from the Torrejon base. Yet the 72 F-16s are in fact divided into three squadrons of 24 planes each, only one of which is usually at Torrejon at any given moment. The rest are on flights to Italy and Turkey, where their nuclear weapons are stored. So the U.S. offer was a fake withdrawal—a new label for the same situation.

Spain is not for sale: The November 14 notification was a reminder from the

Spaniards that Spain is, after all, their country. Letting the media trumpet that the bases may be withdrawn offers the Spanish public a temporarily satisfying illusion. But the real issue has already been watered down to withdrawal of certain aircraft, not of the bases.

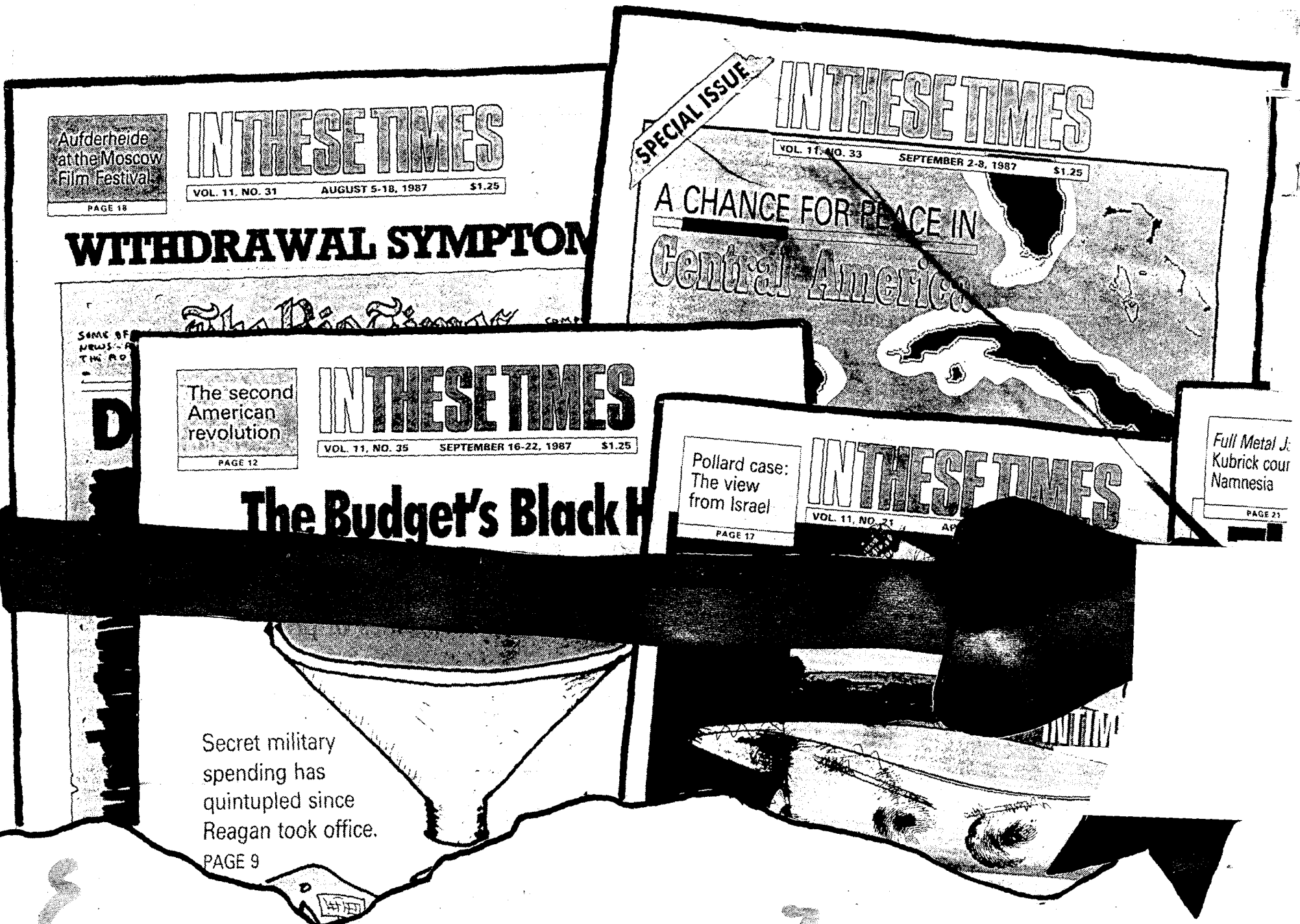
The U.S., meanwhile, is showing its clout. Spanish intelligence sources told the weekly *Tiempo* that during the negotiations on the bases, the CIA was withholding reports of international terrorism, political developments in North Africa and Soviet activities in the Canary Islands that it usually passed on to the Spanish central defense information service (CESID). This made CESID very unhappy, since it depends on the CIA and the Israeli Mossad for such information.

Spain's dependence on the U.S. has been deepened by the purchase of U.S. weapons—ironically intended to give Spain more independence. The biggest joke on Spain is its purchase of U.S. aircraft to modernize its air force.

Defense Minister Narcis Serra's original idea was that Spain could take over the Torrejon base from the Americans for its own new fighter bombers. The Spanish hoped to take over the U.S. F-16s' mission with their own new modernized air force. For that purpose, the defense ministry's arms procurement chief, Eduardo Serra (not related to Narcis Serra, but a friend of Secretary of Defense Frank Carlucci) chose the McDonnell Douglas F-18 "Hornet."

It would have been more in keeping with Spain's desire to become part of Europe to buy the joint German-Italian-British Tornado. When the government announced in 1983 that it was buying the





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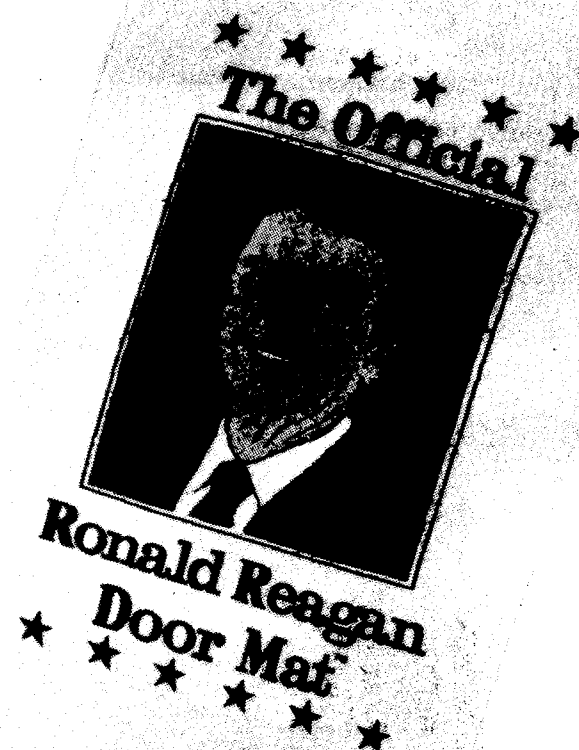
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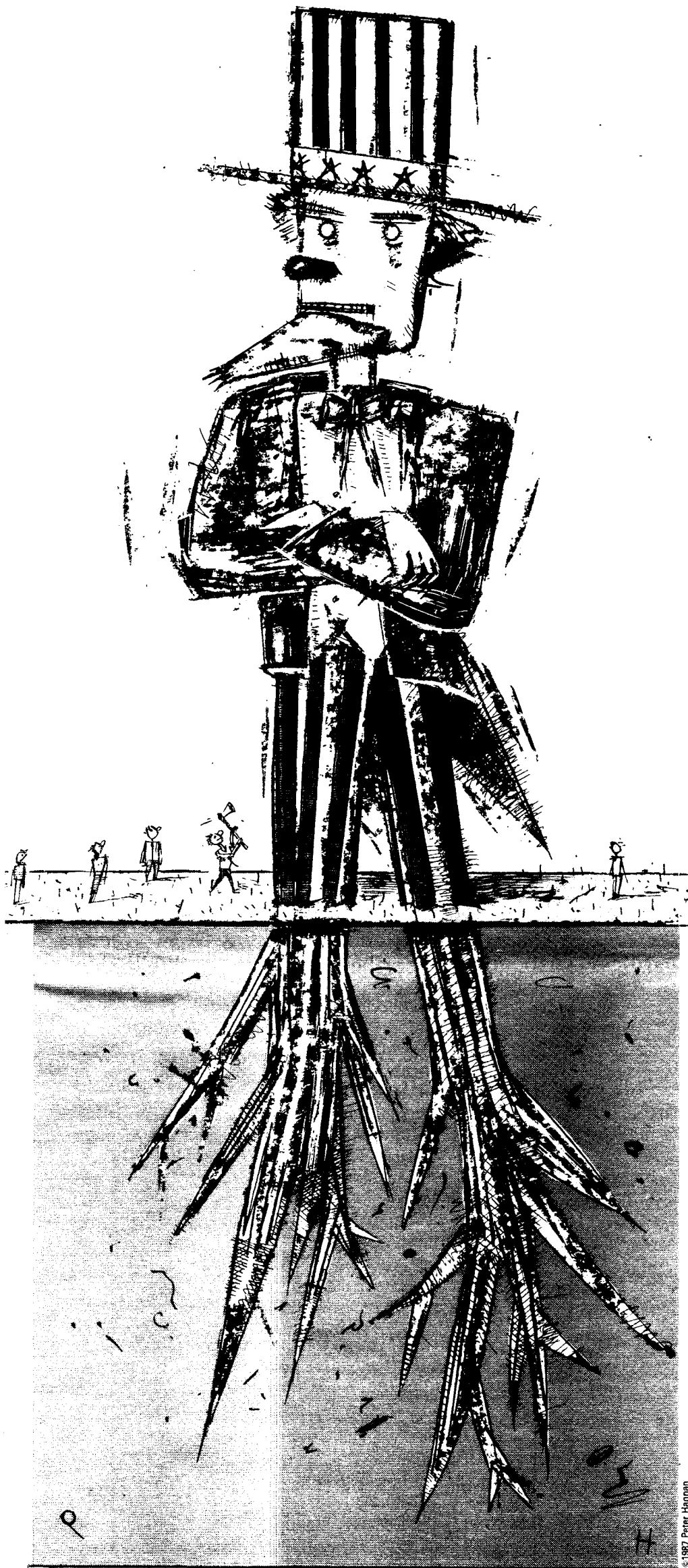
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McDonnell Douglas fighter planes instead, Spanish air force chief Gen. Emilio Garcia Conde called it "a day of mourning for the air force."

How right he was: In November *El Pais* reported from Brussels that the Spanish air force could not take over the U.S. F-16s' missions because the "Hornets" have unexpected bugs. The McDonnell Douglas F-18s have proved incapable of incorporating the arms systems they were supposed to use. The air-to-air Sidewinder missile loses so much precision in the F-18 that it

can't be used. Bombs shake so much when dropped they risk damaging the plane and lack all accuracy. So the plane can use only its guns.

Moreover, the F-18's radar doesn't see far enough for naval support missions. The computerized flight system would be helpful only if the Spanish air force would reveal all its flight patterns to the Americans for a new chip, which it is reluctant to do. Finally, even sand on the runway can trouble an F-18 landing.

El Pais ran a cartoon of Narcis Serra in

the non-functional F-18 exclaiming: "That's why they sold them to us!" In addition, U.S. sources have reportedly warned the Spanish air force that Spain's troublesome attitude about the bases could make spare parts hard to find. The U.S. military aid that was an incitement to buy U.S. rather than European planes has been drastically cut back this year, leaving Spain wondering how it will pay for the F-18s.

In October the U.S. Senate voted that any transfer of the F-16s away from Torreon had to be paid by NATO, not by the U.S. This is indeed odd, since the U.S. aircraft were in Spain under a bilateral agreement that had nothing to do with NATO. The U.S. planes have run operations outside the NATO area, in North Africa and the Mideast.

Sending NATO the bill is one way to prod the NATO allies to pressure Spain to keep the F-16s. European NATO allies pressure is the unkindest cut of all. It explodes Gonzalez' argument that joining NATO was a way for Spain to take its distance from the U.S.

France's special status "outside the integrated military structure" of NATO is the model taken by Gonzalez and Narcis Serra. This emulation has won no support from France. In November French and U.S. officials let it be known that France was stepping up naval cooperation with the U.S. to "help counter developments in some other Mediterranean nations, notably Greece and Spain, where the U.S. faces opposition to naval and air bases," the *International Herald Tribune* reported.

NATO Secretary General Lord Carrington said last July that Spain could not take over U.S. F-16 missions because "Spain is not integrated in the NATO mili-

Spain's dependence on the U.S. has been deepened by the purchase of American weapons—ironically, intended to give Spain more independence.

tary structure." This cleverly used one of the three NATO referendum conditions ("non-integration into NATO's military structure") against another (U.S. withdrawal). The NATO Nuclear Planning Group reportedly showed its total disregard for all three referendum conditions by proposing that U.S. F-111 fighter bombers equipped with nuclear weapons be based in Spain.

As part of its Europeanization, Spain has aspired to join the European NATO core group, the Western European Union (WEU). But last October, the WEU adopted a platform urged on it by France that lauds nuclear deterrence and pledges WEU members to assume "their responsibilities" in nuclear defense of Europe.

Dutch Foreign Minister Hans van den

Broek said acceptance of the platform would be required for other NATO states wanting to join the WEU. This blackballs Spain from the club, so long as it sticks to the anti-nuclear promise in the 1986 referendum. The Belgian general secretary of the WEU, Alfred Cahen, said Spain should not be allowed to join "because it doesn't share the same viewpoints" as other WEU members.

Dutch officials have been particularly active in pressuring Spain. Dutch Defense Minister Wim van Eekelen and the Dutch chairman of the North Atlantic Assembly, Ton Frinking, have both come out publicly for keeping U.S. F-16s in Spain. So has the commander of German NATO forces, Gen. Wolfgang Altenberg. Italian Gen. Luigi Caligaris, who retired a few years ago to propagate the new NATO modernization doctrine in leading Italian newspapers, claimed "not to understand" Spanish policy.

Compensation: Moreover, the Soviet-American INF agreement, which the peoples of Europe view with hope as a step toward mutual disarmament in Europe, is used in NATO to call for more weapons to "compensate" for the Pershing II and cruise missiles. The NATOcrats scold the Spaniards for wanting to reduce American forces just when more are needed.

The Portuguese also back the U.S., while negotiating behind the scenes for possible transfer of the F-16s to bases in Portugal. This is a likely final face-saving solution.

Meanwhile, in their desire to be integrated into the West, Spanish officials have been accepting the doctrine of the "Soviet threat." Some ex-communist intellectuals are particularly active propagating this doctrine.

"The problem is that Spain has no strategic argument against the U.S.," says Mariano Aguirre. "They can point to the referendum. But if I accept the Soviet threat theory, flexible response and the rest, with the need for the U.S. to be in Europe, then it becomes unreasonable to ask for removal of 72 F-16s. There is no sign that the demand is part of a step-by-step plan. They just want to get the planes out because they are obvious."

The newspaper *Ya* commented last May that if Gonzalez is not clearer and goes on giving the impression that he is trying to reduce U.S. forces purely for electoral reasons, Spain will be split. There will be a "minority on the side of unilateral pacifism of communist inspiration," while "the immense majority are converted into a 'fifth column' ready to defend U.S. interests against the government."

The relationship of forces in NATO is such that every European member finds it cheap and easy to side with the U.S. against every other. In 1983 Gonzalez shocked some Social Democrats by expressing "understanding" for Euromissile deployment during a trip to West Germany. Now the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (PSOE) policy is "simply populist nationalism," says Mariano Aguirre: "No nuclear weapons for us here at home," but not based on any principle. □

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Reagan co-stars with a new Soviet matinee idol

There's nothing like a failed presidency to turn a Cold Warrior into a peacemaker. Which is just one more reason to be grateful for the collapse of the Reagan revolution.

To conservatives, last week in Washington had all the earmarks of the despised detente, or, even worse, of World War II days when the U.S. and the Soviet Union were allies in the fight against fascism. With gift shops selling lapel pins having Soviet and American flags intertwined and the Marriott Hotel renaming its coffee shop Cafe Glasnost—and with Reagan comparing his appearance in the same show as the new international star, Mikhail Gorbachov, to a movie in which he ran second to Errol Flynn—it had an air of unreality. But it was real enough, and all to the good.

The INF treaty itself does little to change the military situation between the U.S. and the USSR. It will lead to the destruction of some 2,000 missiles, while we've added 6,000 nuclear missiles overall since 1981. Even so, in narrow military terms the treaty is important in that it eliminates Pershing II missiles deployed in West Germany. These were seen as first-strike weapons—at least by the Soviets. Their elimination should have a stabilizing influence.

And then, as many have noted, this is the first time since the nuclear arms race began that a class of nuclear weapons has been eliminated. The success of these negotiations has already spurred activity to make further, more substantial, cuts in the world's nuclear arsenals.

All this is indicative of something ultimately more important than arms reductions. Weapons have never been the real problem. The threat of war does not come from nuclear bombs or missiles—though with them there is always the chance of an irreversible accident. The fundamental problem, of course, is political. It is a matter of animosity and rivalry, epitomized in Reagan's ideological anti-communism.

For those who believe what he has said about the Soviet Union as the "source of evil in the modern world," this treaty can only be a nightmare. But for the vast majority of Americans it is a return to sanity.

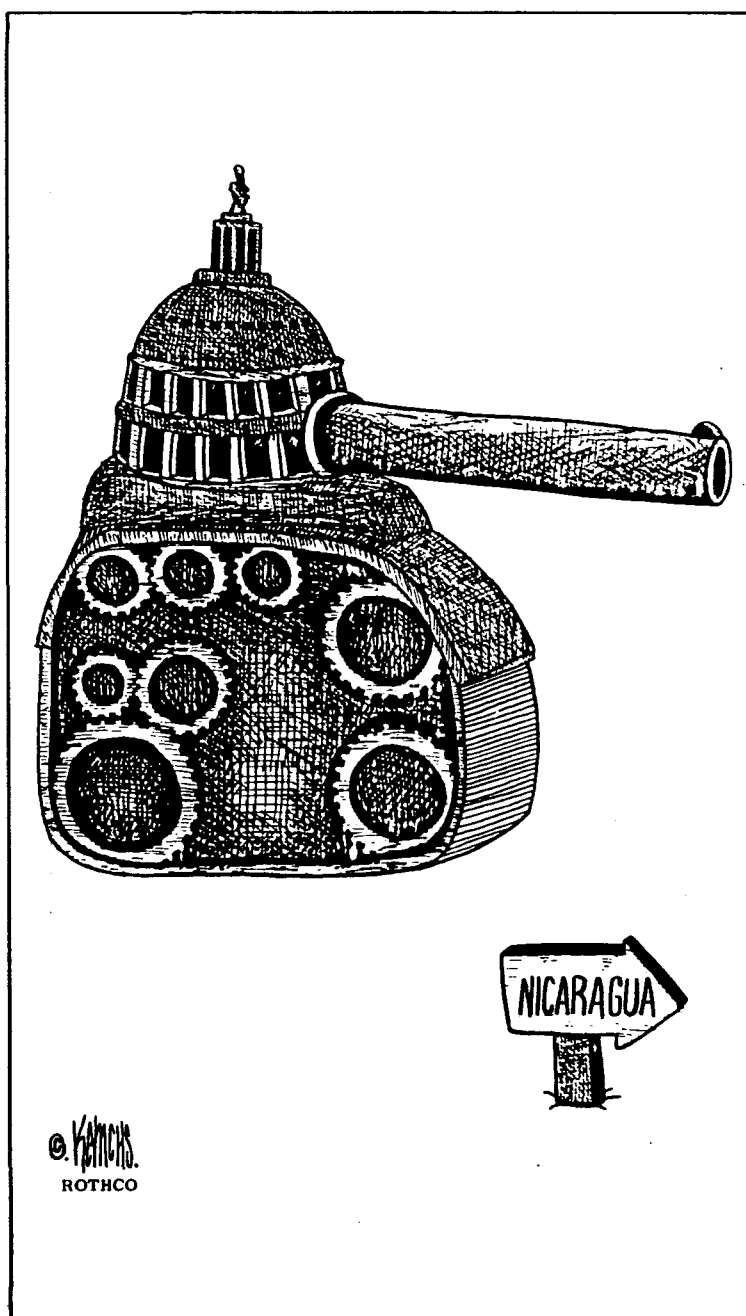
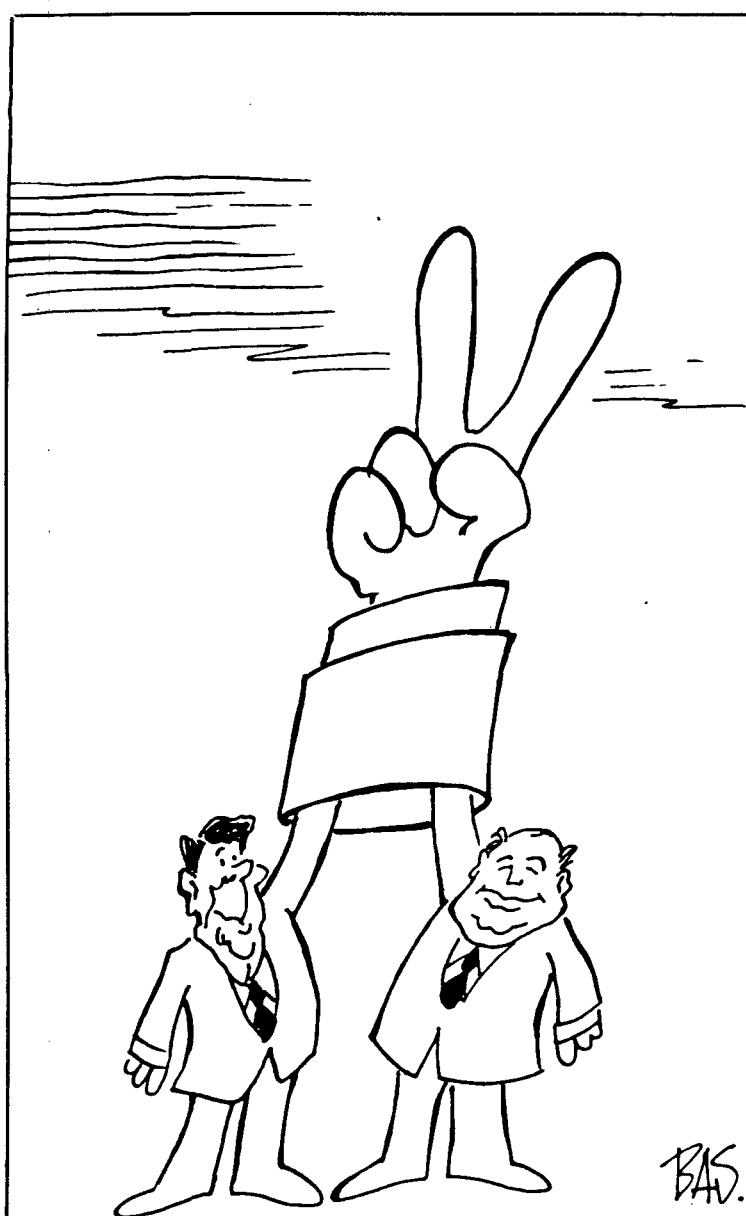
Reagan administration seeks peace through war

Contra aid is almost dead, but the administration is doing all it can to keep it alive. In the House, for the first time in years, a government-wide spending bill was debated early this month with no mention of further support for the contras. Yet Rep. Mickey Edwards (R-OK) believes there will be money for contra aid in the continuing resolution (the money bill) before it is signed into law. While Reagan has decided not to request aid officially for his "freedom fighters," he recently wrote House Minority leader Robert H. Michel (R-IL) that it was "imperative" to include contra aid.

The reason for this contradictory situation is clear: The administration doesn't have the votes to get more contra aid through now that the peace process is in progress; but it hopes the process will fail. Then, once again, it can openly prosecute its war against the Sandinistas. That is why, with as little fanfare as possible, the CIA and the U.S. Air Force have stepped up their activities in Nicaragua. As the Nicaraguan Defense Ministry reported December 6, heavy fighting is still going on, and there have been some 82 incursions into Nicaraguan airspace in the past month, mostly from the direction of Honduras. Twenty-one of those flights, according to the ministry, were by U.S. Air Force planes on "radio electronic exploration and photography" missions.

Meanwhile, negotiations between the Nicaraguan government and the contras has reached an impasse. The contras have asked for what they call "complete democracy"—presumably the kind they accorded the Nicaraguan people when they were running things before the revolution. The government has agreed to a lifting of the state of emergency and a general amnesty, but only after there is an end to U.S. contra aid. As President Daniel Ortega has said repeatedly, it is the Reagan administration's war. If there is to be peace, the U.S. should stop its support of the contras, and if there are to be direct negotiations, they should be with the Reagan administration, which is the source of the conflict.

This position makes perfect sense. Clearly, if the administration wanted the peace process to succeed, it could easily take the steps necessary to achieve that goal. As it is, even without further aid legislated by Congress, the war will drag on indefinitely.



LETTERS

Radiation

I WOULD LIKE TO RESPOND TO KEN SERBIN'S ARTICLE, "A Scared New World: Brazil's Nuclear Tragedy" (ITT, Nov. 18). While this accident was certainly terrible, and will cause untold human suffering, both physical and psychological, it is not true that it was "the West's worst nuclear incident ever." There have been many radiation accidents, spills, leaks, etc., in the U.S. that far exceeded that of Goiânia. Among the earliest radiation victims in the U.S. were the women who painted radium paint onto clock faces for the Radium Dial Company (Ottawa, Ill.). Most of these women died horrible deaths, and the town is now littered with radioactive wastes. The Hanford Reservation, a DOE weapons plant in Washington state, has deliberately released enormous amounts of radiation into the environment since 1943. The partial meltdown of Three Mile Island caused significant increases in infant mortality and cancer in nearby communities. And, worst of all, in towns downwind from the Nevada Test Site (such as St. George, Utah), the cancer rate has skyrocketed from decades of above- and below-ground nuclear weapons testing.

The true lesson of Goiânia is that we must make every effort to put the nuclear genie back into its bottle. While it is easy to point to the inadequate regulation of the nuclear industry in Brazil, the situation here in the U.S. is hardly any better. After four decades of the atomic age, the problem of radioactive waste remains as inscrutable as ever. Radiation pollution in the environment continues to grow each year. Now is the time to affirm life by working to stop further irradiation of the earth.

Mark Robinowitz
Bethesda, Md.

Trap

JOHN JUDIS (ITT, OCT. 28) PRAISED BRUCE BABBIT's plan to apply a "means test" to social welfare programs. It may sound noble to direct social welfare spending exclusively at the poor, but this will simply destroy middle-class political support for the program. Contrast Social Security, which benefits everyone and is politically popular, with the welfare system, which benefits only poor people and is therefore politically unpopular.

The Reaganauts attempted to cut Social Security in the past, with little success. Too many people benefit from it. The current goal of the policymaking elite is to make small cuts now, in order to eliminate the politically "untouchable" nature of Social Security, in order to set the stage for deeper cuts in the future. The editors of the *New York Times* (Nov. 5) called for "curbs on the growth of entitlement programs benefiting the middle class" and specifically praised the congressional Republicans for "bravely" pressing for curbs "on that most sacred cow among entitlements, Social Security." The "goal," said the *Times*, is "to have the burden distributed in a way that signals Washington's determination to make much larger cuts in the future."

Cutting entitlements in order to eliminate the deficit lacks logic, because entitlements didn't cause the deficit in the first place. The deficit was caused by tax cuts for the rich

and increases for the military. The left should combat the assault on Social Security. We should aim for universal coverage, and should not apologize for including middle-class recipients in programs.

John W. Farley
Henderson, Nev.

Pure and simple

I MUST PROTEST THE SALIM MUWAKKIL ARTICLE, "Breaking Away: Growing Debate on Black Autonomy" (ITT, Nov. 11). The article, heavily slanted toward resegregation and black nationalism, might belong in the publication of the giant corporation ITT, but not in the progressive newspaper ITT. Your writers should have the freedom to express their opinions, but I would hope for editorial opposition to those who would return to dual school systems or the "separate but equal" approach.

I can understand and sympathize with the frustration of honest voices dealing with the inordinately high drop-out rate and failure in the educational system. But the fight against integration is not the answer. "We need the freedom to try new things," yes, but the "new things" must not include racism, or apartheid, or opposition to black-white unity.

Those who would regress to the 19th century, be they white segregationists or black Muslims, are not guilty of "reverse racism." They are guilty of racism. "Reverse racism" embodies within its name a partial justification, one that scarcely applies in the case of Rabbi Kahane or Louis Farrakhan.

Aaron Katz
Brooklyn

Shouting

I'M WRITING A BOOK, *THE LESSER EVIL*, ON THE Democrats. It has a chapter on the party's bottomless corruption, and I read Salim Muwakkil's defensive—or semi-defensive?—piece on the black politicians and grafting (ITT, Nov. 4) with dismay.

Frankly, it is incredible that he should not be shouting from the rooftops, denouncing Mayor Marion Barry of Washington, certainly the nation's best example of urban blight. His first wife was convicted in 1983 of diverting funds from their poverty hustle, Pride Inc. When she got out of the slammer he gave her a job with his parole board. His present wife went on a buying spree, picking up \$1,150 in clothes. Then she had the audacity to claim she had no idea that the lobbyist who picked up the tab did business with the city. In 1985 the city bought a piece of land, worth \$6.7 million, for \$11 million,

from the godfather of Barry's son. One deputy mayor pleaded guilty of grafting. Another is doing seven years for stealing \$190,000. As Muwakkil himself wrote, 11 major Barry administration figures have been found guilty.

Let us be categorical: the black Democrats' bullshit about how blacks are being singled out for graft persecutions is exactly the same as Geraldine Ferraro and Mario Cuomo's crap about how everyone is prejudiced and thinks all Italians are in the Mafia. By now everyone knows that the New York State Democratic Party is, arguably, the most corrupt political organization on the planet.

Let's go further yet. Every paper in the country writes about how Rev. Jesse Jackson has become a "mainstream" Democrat. But what has not attracted enough attention is his constant involvement with party sleaze. He also goes along with the garbage about how the prosecutors are picking on poor Barry. And he eagerly took the endorsement of "the Cajun king," Gov. Edwin Edwards of Louisiana, whose administration is every bit as corrupt as Barry's. And now he has California Assembly Speaker Willie Brown as his national campaign chairman. Muwakkil is probably not aware of Brown's involvement with W. Patrick Moriarty, convicted of political corruption. But the *Bay Guardian* and the *San Jose Mercury-News*—two of the most liberal papers in the state—have run in-depth stories about how Brown is covering up for the legislators Moriarty paid off.

Let there be no misunderstanding. The black Democrats are no more corrupt than the white ones. But one thing I know for sure: If the Black Congressional Caucus had a flyspeck of integrity it would not be prattling about prosecutors picking on black Democrats. Instead it would threaten the party: set up a commission to clean out the endemic grafters, or we leave. Does anyone think the Caucus will ever say that?

Lenni Brenner
Berkeley, Calif.

Devil's due

I AGREE WITH PAT AUFDERHEIDE (IN HER REVIEW of the film *Cry Freedom*, ITT, Nov. 18) that Richard Attenborough isn't much of a director, but her comment that Attenborough "turned to directing after a successful career as a commercial film star in such kitsch classics as *The Baby and the Battleship*, is a major-league cheap shot.

For the record, Attenborough was an excellent character actor, and gave memorable performances in a slew of good films,

including *Brighton Rock*, *The Angry Silence* (a very good film about labor unions), *The Great Escape*, *Seance on a Wet Afternoon*, *The Flight of the Phoenix* and many others.

Attenborough was such a good actor, and is such a mediocre director, that I wish he'd return to what he does best. But for Aufderheide to pretend that he was some sort of kitschy talent is distorting the facts.

Lewis Beale
Entertainment Industry Reporter
Los Angeles

VDTs

THANKS FOR THE INFORMATIVE ARTICLE ON THE health risks of VDTs (ITT, Nov. 18). The author rightly scolds the media for failing to report on the health risks of VDTs, but he mentions only in passing what I firmly believe is the biggest reason for the media's silence on the issue. VDTs are essential to the operation of virtually every publication in this country. Editors and publishers don't want their employees thinking twice about sitting down to work because of health concerns. Nor do they want employees demanding costly modifications for the computers to prevent health problems.

No editor is going to assign a story that will cause unrest among the troops—or raise questions about conditions at the paper among readers. And reporters aren't going to propose writing a story that will piss the editors off in the short run and never get printed in the long run. I'm not just guessing that this is how it works. I'm a reporter for a daily paper and I know it for a fact.

Beth Jackendoff
Brooklyn, N.Y.

Awkward terminology

I OBJECT TO MILES HARVEY'S USE (ITT, NOV. 11) OF the term "pro-Israel" to describe those who pressured the State Department to close down the Palestine Information Office in Washington.

Can't one be pro-Israel and still support negotiations between Israel and the PLO to achieve peaceful coexistence? Can't one endorse Israel's right to exist and also strongly condemn abuses by the Israeli government against Palestinians?

Terminology like Harvey's would suggest not, and helps alienate a lot of us on the left (especially Jews) around the Palestinian issue.

Judith Kaye
Providence, R.I.

Editor's note: Kaye's point is well taken. But it was the Israel lobby that pushed this through.

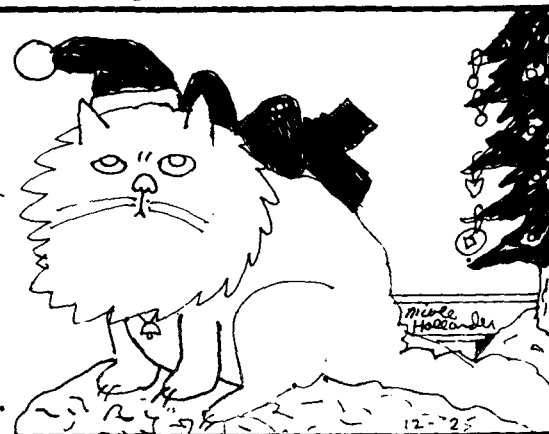
SYLVIA



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NO, I did NOT
DRINK ALL the
WATER out of
the CHRISTMAS
TREE STAND...
PERHAPS it WAS
REINDEERS.

Merry Christmas.



by Nicole Hollander

By John Mehring

JORDAN BARAB'S RESPONSE TO DAN DE Noon's article on AIDS and the health-care community (*ITT*, Oct 14, Nov. 4) provides an insider's account of the struggle to move the federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to enforce the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) infection-control guidelines for blood-borne diseases, including, primarily, AIDS and hepatitis-B.

While it is important that OSHA enforces CDC infection-control guidelines' compli-

Health-care workers' unions should take lead in AIDS fight

ance by hospitals and other health-care institutions, health-care workers' unions should play a more prominent role in the AIDS crisis. It is not enough simply to push for, then rely on, government enforcement.

Health-care workers as a group have not

received adequate education and training regarding AIDS, or, in many cases, been supplied with the necessary equipment to protect themselves from infection. There is a continuous need for more education and training. All health-care workers, whether providing direct or indirect care, should receive this instruction, including mandatory periodic updates.

Currently such education and training is being done primarily by hospitals and other health-care institutions, mostly without input from workers or their unions. Whole classes of workers who are not direct-care providers but, nevertheless, have fears and anxiety about AIDS are often excluded. As Barab noted in his article, OSHA does not have the resources now to change this situation, and appears at this time unable to correct the situation to the benefit of health-care workers.

But unions could provide leadership in AIDS education programs. Barab mentioned workers "have been turning to their unions to provide education and training needed to do their jobs safely." For his union, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), "AIDS has created more demand for information than any other safety issue." Unfortunately, Barab did not tell us what AFSCME is doing in its represented worksites to educate and train staff, stewards and members.

One union, Service Employees International Union (SEIU), has a reputable AIDS education record. Initially spurred to action in 1984 by a local rank-and-file AIDS education committee in San Francisco, SEIU has adopted and frequently reprinted the committee's brochure "AIDS and the Health Care Worker." The international's occupational health and safety department has subsequently published the more comprehensive *The AIDS Book: Information for Workers*.

These educational materials, funded by grants from the U.S. Department of Labor, are widely circulated throughout the country in both union and non-union settings. Health-care workers find them important reference guides, addressing their questions and concerns.

Still, as good as this material is, workers need more from their unions. As the incidence of AIDS increases and the epidemic affects more areas of life, unions should consider forming their own AIDS education committees to coordinate their responses to AIDS, or at least incorporate their response in pre-existing or newly-established health and safety committees.

A broad response: San Francisco's Local 250, SEIU's largest health-care workers' union, representing 30,000 workers in northern California, has had its rank-and-file AIDS education committee since 1983. The activities of the committee are varied:

1 Committee members help conduct union-sponsored AIDS education workshops for staff, stewards and interested members.

• Next year, working with the University of California Labor Occupational Health Program at Berkeley, several dozen Local

250 stewards will take part in a "train the trainer" program to help knowledgeable stewards educate 10 more co-workers about AIDS and infection-control precautions. One objective of this training is to create an environment in worksites with AIDS-trained stewards that will foster voluntary and universal adherence to infection-control procedures without the involvement of regulatory agencies.

• Many hospitals have "AIDS coordinating committees" or "multidisciplinary resource teams" that review hospital policies and procedures. The committee includes members who sit on these in-house task forces.

• Committee members also serve as advocates for AIDS patients. AIDS health-care workers increasingly agree that specialized AIDS units in hospitals provide superior care for AIDS patients because workers there have chosen to work with AIDS patients, community support groups can more easily focus their resources in a particular location, care can be closely monitored and up-to-date information most easily disseminated.

• On the political front, the committee has put the union on record favoring AIDS anti-discrimination ordinances and the committee lobbies for increased government funding for AIDS research, education and health and social services.

• To get contract protection for members with AIDS, AIDS-related complex (ARC), or HIV-antibody status, the committee has encouraged the union to propose language in its contracts banning discrimination because of sexual orientation, lifestyle or handicapped status. The union is also attempting to negotiate economic benefits for members not married to their partners, extending health insurance and bereavement leave to them.

• Unions can use the increasingly recognized need for AIDS education to force management to join health-safety committees that can monitor infection-control compliance.

Mixed record: Union involvement means not only educating the rank and file about AIDS, but also organizing members to bring about a safer work environment, better patient care and increased support for research, education and services.

So far, the record is mixed. Labor councils have shunned sponsoring "AIDS in the workplace" conferences. And labor, whose generosity for established charities is well-known, has avoided raising significant funds for AIDS-related agencies. But the best AIDS literature for health-care workers has been produced and distributed by unions.

If AIDS is truly "public health enemy No. 1," then unions must commit substantial financial and staff resources of their own to AIDS education, and use every opportunity to reach out and engage their members in this fight.

Local 250's AIDS Education Committee, chaired by Peggy Ferro-Guinto, may be contacted at 240 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco, CA 94102. The AIDS Book: Information for Workers is available for \$2.50 from SEIU, 1313 L St., NW, Washington, DC 20005. AIDS and the Health Care Worker is available free of charge from the same address.

John Mehring is a hospital shop steward and an AIDS education activist in San Francisco.

INDEPENDENT VOICES, EAST AND WEST, CALL FOR AN END TO U.S.-BACKED LOANS TO PINOCHET'S CHILE

As supporters of movements for freedom and social justice everywhere in the world, whether in South Africa, Poland, Turkey or the Soviet Union, we are deeply dismayed at the Chilean government's systematic assault on the rights of its citizens. The United States can assist those who seek democracy and respect for human rights in Chile by withdrawing any form of economic support to the regime as long as the current pattern of repression continues. We call upon the Reagan Administration to support Chilean democratic leaders' requests for an end to international financial aid to Pinochet by voting against all loans to Chile until the following conditions are fulfilled:

The reinstitution of basic political rights, including freedom of assembly, freedom of information and the right to participate in democratic elections

The restoration of the independence of the judicial system

The restoration of workers' rights to organize and to bargain collectively

An end to the cruel practice of forced exile

The abolition of torture and other forms of cruel and degrading treatment

The above statement opposing U.S.-backed loans to Chile has been signed by leading peace, labor, social justice and cultural figures from the United States, Western Europe, Canada and Japan. They are joined by a large number of activists and writers from the Eastern bloc, many of whom have been persecuted in their own countries for work in independent peace and human rights movements.

Statement circulated by The Campaign for Peace and Democracy East and West

Signatories to Campaign for Peace and Democracy/East and West Chile statement:

United States

Edward Asner, actor
Virginia Baron, editor, *Fellowship*
Angela Berryman
Phillip Berryman, translator/writer
George Black, *The Nation*
Virginia M. Bouvier
James Cannon

Ann Carter, Brown Free South Africa Coalition
Cesar Chavez, Pres., United Farmworkers of America, AFL-CIO
Naam Chomsky, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

David Cortright, SANE
Darlene Cucchiello, Intercommunity Center for Justice and Peace
Gail Danker, Campaign for Peace and Democracy/East and West

Richard Deas, Fellowship of Reconciliation
Ronald V. Dellums, U.S. Congress
Adrian DeWind
E.L. Doctorow

Manuela Dobos, College of Staten Island, City University of New York
Father Robert Drinan, Georgetown University Law Center
Polly Duncan, Sojourners

Bob Edgar, International Center for Development Policy
Daniel Ellsberg
W.H. and Carol Bernstein Ferry
Melinda Fine

Catherine Fitzpatrick
Randall Forsberg, Institute for Defense and Disarmament Studies
Herbert J. Gans, Columbia University

Rev. John Gietner, M.M., Maryknoll Fathers Justice and Peace Office
Allen Ginsberg, American Institute of Arts & Letters; PEN Club Freedom to Write Committee
Tod Gittlin, University of California, Berkeley

John Glasel, Pres., Local 802, American Federation of Musicians
Victor Gotbaum, District Council 37, American Federation of State County & Municipal Employees
Minard Hamilton, Radioactive Waste Campaign

Michael Harrington, Democratic Socialists of America
Thomas Harrison, Campaign for Peace and Democracy/East and West
Judith Hemphill, Peace Activists East and West

Nancy L. Heskest, American Peace Test
Stanley W. Hill, Exec. Dir., American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees, District Council 37
Adam Hochschild, *Mother Jones* magazine

A. Winton Jackson, *Across Frontiers* magazine
Julius & Phyllis Jacobson, editors, *New Politics* magazine

Joanne Landy and Thomas Harrison, Directors, Campaign for Peace and Democracy/East and West
P.O. Box 1640, Cathedral Station
New York, NY 10025 (212) 714-1157

Yes, add my name to the above list of signers. I am also enclosing \$_____ to help further publicize the statement in this country and abroad:

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

Charles King
Charles Knight, The Commonwealth Institute
Erwin Knoll, *The Progressive*
Jeri Laber
Joanne Landy, Campaign for Peace and Democracy/East and West

William M. LeoGrande, American University
Charles Levenstein, University of Lowell
Penny Lernoux, Writer
Margaret Lloyd
David McReynolds, War Resisters League

Rev. Paul Mayer, The Religious Task Force
Seymour Melman, Columbia University
Samuel Meyers, Pres., UAW Local 259
Kim Moody, *Labor Notes*

Roy Morrison, Clamshell Alliance
Brian Morton, Campaign for Peace and Democracy/East and West
Arjeh Neier
Stan Niewiarowski, Temple University

David Oakford, Campaign for Peace and Democracy/East and West
Grace Paley
Rosemary Radford Ruether, theologian

Adrienne Rich, Stanford University
Randall Robinson, TransAfrica
William Shakalis, Socialist Party, USA
Stanley K. Shelnbaum
William L. Smith, New Jersey Rainbow Coalition

Cheryl Stevenson
Katherine S. Stokes
Rose Styron, Chair, P.E.N. Freedom to Write Committee
Paul M. Sweezy, *Monthly Review*

Michael Uquhart, Pres., American Federation of Government Employees, Local 12
Amos Vogel, author, Univ. of Pennsylvania

Frank von Hippel, Princeton University
Alice Walker, writer
Paul F. Walker, Institute for Peace and International Security

Jim Wallis, *Sojourners*
Arthur Waskow, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College
James Weinstein, *In These Times*

Stan Weir, Singlejack Books
Roger W. Wilkins, Senior Fellow, Institute for Policy Studies
Rev. William L. Wipfler, Human Rights Office, National Council of Churches

Max & Sylvia Wohl, Socialist Party, Cleveland
Anne B. Zill, Pres., Fund for Constitutional Government

Czechoslovakia
(All except Kavan are Charter 77 signatories; all but Kavan and Tomin live in Czechoslovakia. Of the signers, 15 are present or former Charter spokespersons. All are signing as individuals.)

Rudolf Batek, former member of parliament; sociologist, essayist; former political prisoner; member Committee for the Defense of the Unjustly Prosecuted (VONS)
Jiri Dienstbier, former foreign editor and TV correspondent, now stoker; former

prisoner; VONS
Jiri Hajek, former historian, diplomat and foreign minister
Vaclav Havel, playwright; VONS; former prisoner

Marie Hromadkova, former Communist Party official
Eva Kanturkova, writer, former prisoner
Jan Kavan, co-director, Palach Press Agency; editor, *East European Reporter*, London

Marie Rut Krizkova, former literary historian, now postal clerk
Ladislav Lis, former lawyer and party official; former prisoner; VONS
Jan Lapotka, literary critic

Vaclav Maly, Catholic priest burned by state from exercising pastoral duties; VONS; former prisoner
Lenka Mareckova-Mullerova, metro employee; former prisoner; VONS
Bedrich Placak, former surgeon; worked as nightwatchman until fired when became Charter spokesperson

Vladimir Riba, former lecturer
Marie Rihova, dentist
Jiri Ruml, former journalist and prisoner; VONS
Anna Sabatova, former prisoner; VONS

Jan Stern, former journalist
Vladimir Stern
Jana Sternova, former dancer, now a cleaning woman
Jaromir Sibice, economist
Zdena Tomin, exiled novelist

Petr Uhl, former teacher, now stoker; former prisoner; VONS
Josef Vohryzek, former journalist

Hungary
Gabor Demszky, sociologist, editor *AB* independent publishers
Olga Dioszegi, student, activist in democratic opposition
Istvan Forsi, writer
Gyorgy Gado, translator, activist in democratic opposition

Miklos Haraszti, writer, co-editor *Beszelo*
Janos Kenedi, philosopher
Janos Kis, philosopher, co-editor *Beszelo*
Gyorgy Konrad, writer
Perenc Koszegi, teacher, co-editor *Beszelo*

Laszlo Rajk, architect, activist in democratic opposition
Sandor Szilagyi, literary critic, co-editor *Beszelo*
Gaspard Miklos Tamas, philosopher

Poland
Marek Adamkiewicz, active in independent peace movement, Freedom and Peace
Jacek Czaputowicz, Freedom and Peace
Janusz Grzelak, social psychologist
Zofia Kuratowska, hematologist
Wojciech Lamentowicz, Professor of Law, Warsaw Univ.

Jan Jozef Lipski, KOR (Workers Defense Committee, disbanded 1981); former prisoner; literary historian
Barbara Malak, social psychologist
Jan Minkiewicz, Representative, Freedom and Peace in the West
Piotr Niemczyk, Freedom and Peace
Janusz Onyszkiewicz, lawyer; KOR
Jacek Szymanski, Freedom and Peace; former Solidarnosc leader
Klemens Szaniawski, philosopher; former chairman, Coordinating Committee of Creative and Scientific Associations

prisoner; VONS
Jiri Hajek, former historian, diplomat and foreign minister
Vaclav Havel, playwright; VONS; former prisoner

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Jaromir Sibice, economist
Zdena Tomin, exiled novelist

Petr Uhl, former teacher, now stoker; former prisoner; VONS
Josef Vohryzek, former journalist

USSR
Ladislav Alexeyev, founding member, Moscow Helsinki Watch, now living in U.S.; author of *Soviet Dissent*
Alexander Feldman, Moscow Trust Group (the independent Soviet peace movement)
Vladimir Glezer, Moscow Trust Group, now living in the West

Grigori Jakobson, Moscow Trust Group
Andrei Krivos, Moscow Trust Group
Yuri & Olga Medvedkov, founding members, Moscow Trust Group, now living in U.S.
Yury Orlov
Vladimir Tokarev, Moscow Trust Group

Yugoslavia
Ingrid Bakse, peace activist
Dobrica Cosic, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts
Pavel Gantar, sociologist
Marko Hren, mathematician
Bogdan Lesnik, psychologist
Mihailo Markovic, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts

Tomaz Mestnak, sociologist
Rastko Mocnik, philosopher
Milan Nikolic, sociologist, tried for paper written while at Brandeis University
Braco Rotar, professor

Other
Isabel Allende, Chilean author
Ariel Dorfman, Chilean author
Isabel Morel Letelier, Institute for Policy Studies
Lage Andreasson, President, Swedish Food Workers' Union
Gert Bastian, Member of Bundestag, Green Party, West Germany

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By Zijiang Ding

SINCE 1949, THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF China has adopted a temporary constitution—the 1949 Common Program—and four other constitutions—in 1954, 1975, 1978 and 1982. But for the most part, these documents have not functioned as fundamental law. They were violated or ignored arbitrarily by Chinese Communist Party (CCP) leaders. But the 1982 constitution seems to build the framework for a complete and effective legal system.

In order to avoid disasters like the Cultural Revolution and to get a more stable and constructive environment for national development, the Chinese—from top leaders to ordinary people—desire an efficient and practical constitution. And, indeed, the new constitution has given people hope, although there is still widespread skepticism about its function and effect.

Academic debate. Before its adoption, important arguments over the new constitution occurred among scholars who represented different factions in the Chinese Communist Party. Premier Deng Xiaoping saw the ills of the Chinese political system to be "bureaucracy, excessive concentration of power, the patriarchal system, the life tenure of cadres in leading posts and special privileges of all sorts."

A radical reformer, Liao Gailong, who worked at the Central Policy Research Office of the CCP, argued in his 1980 Reform-plan that Mao Tse-tung's theory of democracy—democracy as a means, not an end—was incorrect. Democracy is both a means and an end, Liao insisted. It can be considered the final goal of socialism.

Liao emphasized both democracy and efficiency as justification for separating party and state. But in 1980 Liao could not have expected his ideas to be realized in the 1982 constitution.

Party theoretician Wu Jialin, in an article in *Red Flag Journal* entitled "How Can We Make the National People's Congress Function as the State Power Organ," pointed out that in order thoroughly to separate party and government, we must alter two existing principles—"the Chairman of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China commands the armed forces of the People's Republic of China," and "the chairman chooses the premier of the State Council (SC) upon the recommendation of the party."

Similarly, Feng Wenbin, the vice-head of the Organizational department of the CCP, claimed that "in order to develop socialist democracy and realize state political democratization, we must put into effect the separation of the party and the government."

Owing to the limitations of the times and their political status, all reformers who emphasized separation of party and government agreed that their aim was to make the party leadership more important. Indirect party leadership that is political rather than organizational was their goal.

These reformers' plans were obviously limited, giving no hope that the party will be completely separated from administration in the foreseeable future.

Putting reforms into practice: The 1982 constitution seems to have defined a limited separation of party and state. But moving those provisions from paper to practice will not be simple. Such progress

A historical look at China's constitutional framework



Premier Deng Xiaoping

is contingent on the ability of the National People's Congress (NPC) to fulfill its role as the highest organ of state power. According to the most recent document, the NPC standing committee wields more substantial power than before.

But limitations remain. Indirect elections prevent the people from electing even the members of the NPC, let alone the chairman and other members of the NPC standing committee. The chairman is still an important member of the CCP Politburo.

A significant step forward in the 1982 constitution is the adoption of direct elections at the county level for the local people's congresses. Direct election with decentralization of power should enable local participation in political, economic and cultural management. This mechanism also is supposed to complete the institutionalization of local legal systems and portray the will of the people to the central authority. It is useful to prevent local bureaucrats from deceiving their superiors and deluding their

A significant step forward in the 1982 constitution is the adoption of direct elections for the local people's congresses.

subordinates. The pity is that this mechanism has only functioned on a very limited scale.

A real separation of the party from the government hinges on whether the State Council (SC) can really function as the highest administrative organ of the state. With the party intervening less in administrative affairs, the council will certainly increase its power. Several other factors strengthen the role of the SC. One is the development of the economy, which requires a more powerful executive branch. Another is the deletion in the new constitution of all provisions that allow the party to intervene directly in government affairs,

and the addition of explicit new functions and powers. Although the SC is under the supervision of the NPC and its standing committee, the NPC standing committee has no power to remove the premier and his cabinet members.

But whether the SC can be effective depends on the prestige of the constitution in the political system, and the personal prestige of whoever is premier.

The judicial branch: No real separation of the party from the government can occur until the Supreme People's Court (SPC) becomes the highest judicial authority. The 1982 constitution not only restores two principles—-independent judiciary and subjecting only to law—but also adopts a new principle, that courts are not subject to interference by administrative organs, public organizations or individuals. But the so-called independent judicial branch is ultimately responsible to the NPC. It must be subordinated to the party's leadership. It must meet the needs of the special political movements launched by the party, and also yield to some social pressures. A difference between Western judicial independence and the Chinese judicial independence is that the former emphasizes the independent judge, and the latter the so-called independent court.

For a long time, the People's Republic of China's communist theoreticians criticized the Western doctrine of separation of powers. According to them, this doctrine was nothing but "a downright bourgeois fraud," "no more than an instrument facilitating the capitalist rule," because "in reality, the administrative power was higher than anything else and was totally under the control of the monopoly of the capitalist class." But in 1980, some reformers put forward different positions. They believed that the theory of separation of powers and the principle of checks and balances were historical steps forward—and that their practice in the West, especially in the U.S., has proven effective and positive.

Separation of power: The 1982 constitution adopts a new "system of the separation of six powers" under the supervision of the NPC and finally under the leadership of the CCP:

- (1) Legislative power: the NPC standing committee—the standing body of the highest organ of the state power;
- (2) Administrative power: The State Council—the executive body of the highest administrative body of the state;
- (3) Symbolic power: the presidency—a nominal figurehead;
- (4) Military power: the Central Military Commission—the highest command of China's armed forces;
- (5) Judicial power: the Supreme People's Court—the highest judicial organ of the state;
- (6) Supervisory power: the Supreme People's Procuratorate—the highest supervisory organ of the state.

Comparing the separation of powers in the People's Republic of China with that of Western countries, these differences

emerge

First, all powers are checked by the CCP single-party leadership which, as the highest organization of the proletariat, is above everything else and commands everything else. Second, all powers must become tools used by the people's democratic dictatorship, a weapon that protects the socialist system. Third, all powers must emerge into a general power—the NPC, which not only serves as a legislature but also commands and supervises the executive and the judiciary under the party leadership.

A milestone: The new constitution itself is a milestone in the development of China's political system. The 1982 constitution eradicated all postulates and provisions born in the Cultural Revolution and in many respects is a return to the postulates of the first constitution.

So far, China has achieved significant successes in economic, political and social reform since 1976, although it always moves forward three steps, and then backward two steps. To be sure, there still is a limit to all these reforms and changes. University of Chicago Professor Tang Tsou points out, that "although the trend toward the increasingly deep penetration of political power into society has been reversed, China is only beginning its transition to a post-totalitarian society. This process of transition may well be halted or even reversed." But the common aspiration of the people is to continue to make social progress. That is an irreversible trend.

Zijiang Ding is a visiting scholar from Beijing at Northwestern University.

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By Lawrence Swaim

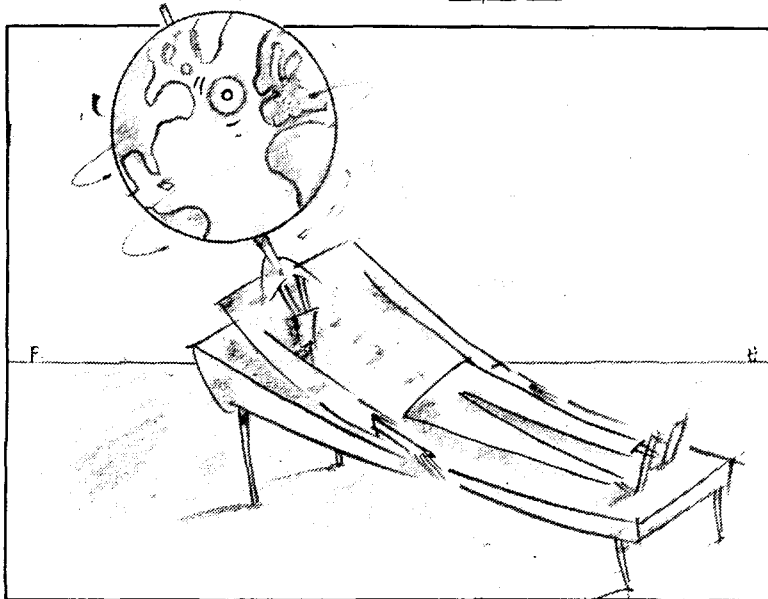
MSCOTT PECK IS NOT EASY to pigeonhole as a writer or as a thinker. One of the most popular and successful speakers of our time (\$6,000 plus expenses per appearance), he is simultaneously an opponent of the nuclear arms race, a Christian evangelical, a psychiatrist, an inspirational author and an extraordinarily idiosyncratic thinker. Is he part of the solution or part of the problem?

Peck's first book, *The Road Less Traveled*, is one of the most popular books ever written, sales doubling every year from 1979 to 1985, when it assumed the No. 1 position on the *New York Times* paperback bestseller list. Its central message is also the first line of the book: "Life is difficult." People who try to run from their problems end up making them worse, and also frequently end up mentally ill. (This idea is little more than a variation on one of Carl Jung's concepts, one which Peck acknowledges early in the book: "Neurosis is always a substitute for legitimate suffering.")

Health comes from legitimate suffering; discipline (by which Peck apparently means self-discipline) is the key, when it is motivated by love. Evil is real, and occurs in the form of laziness, or spiritual entropy, which drags the seeker down and prevents growth. In Peck's system, mental health is a form of grace, in the sense that grace is understood in traditional Christian theology.

Like Jung, Peck also tends to equate God with the unconscious mind (as in Jung's theory of the "wise" unconscious, which supposedly possesses a preternatural knowledge). Thus whatever the subconscious mind is saying is probably right. But which instinct is God, and which isn't? (Jung's great error was to approve of Hitler—at least briefly—because he seemed an expression of the collective unconscious. Thus Hitler had to be good.) In reality, the unconscious mind presents us with endless dualisms, and we become wise only to the extent to which we make contact with our best instincts rather than our worst ones.

Lazy Lucifer: In a later book, *People of the Lie*, Peck reveals what he thinks is really behind laziness. It is Satan, who, Peck insists, is not a metaphor but an actual spiritual being who intervenes in human affairs. (Peck had, since writing *The Road Less Traveled*, become a Christian evangelical.) According to Peck, Satan's method for disseminating evil is to use extraordinarily powerful people to twist, destroy or otherwise suppress the spiritual growth of those around them; their generic characteristic is an ability to conceal their real aims from others, and to some ex-



Peck's self-help: the load unravelled

tent from themselves. Peck writes of two mental patients who he says were possessed by Satan, at whose exorcisms he was present. How does Peck know that Satan was there? He just knows; his presence was "alien and inhuman," as everybody there agreed.

A belief in Satan as a real spiritual being is completely foreign to the thinking of most modern intellectuals. But that is not important to Peck, because he is not a highbrow author, but a popular one, and the rules for popular writing are different. One purpose of highbrow culture is to repress difficult questions, or to imply that there are no answers to them. But the central purpose of this brand of popular culture is to raise difficult questions, and then supply easy answers.

Clearly Peck is addressing issues that many Americans find important. Why are his solutions so popular?

Recipe for inspiration: To begin with, a successful inspirational book must present familiar ideas in ways that seem new, exciting and authoritative. Peck's belief that laziness is an Original Sin caused by the Devil is a very old American idea, a modern restatement of the peculiar High Calvinism so typical of Puritan separatists in 17th-century America. (A favorite saying of those times was, "Idle hands are the Devil's workshop"—and this ideal of productivity as the highest good still plays an important part in the American worship of the marketplace.)

A successful inspirational book must also provide a pat answer, and Peck fills the bill here as well. ("With total discipline we can solve all problems," he writes.) The popular thinker must also appear to effortlessly synthesize diverse or opposing traditions. Peck's oversimplified schema integrates religion and psychotherapy. ("In my vi-

sion the collective unconscious is God; the conscious is man as individual; and the personal unconscious is the interface between them.")

In this kind of self-help literature one doesn't compare one's vision to existing or competing traditions, which in Peck's case would have to include most modern theologians; this strain of popular writing exists to inspire rather than persuade. Inspirational writers must wax anecdotal, regularly illustrating ideas with stories and jokes. This is the only way—as Lincoln well knew—that an applied philosophy can be popularly disseminated.

But Peck's appeal stems from more than his savvy adherence to a proven formula. Perhaps his strongest attraction is his willingness to acknowledge the reality of evil. We are surrounded by evidence of it—the Holocaust, the nuclear arms race—but perhaps the secular intellectual's greatest default has been an inability to develop a theory of evil and how it is culturally transmitted, or even to admit that it exists. This has left

In six months M. Scott Peck's best-selling self-help book will influence more people to think about the nuclear arms race than the left could in six years.

the door open to people like Peck, who at least are not afraid to address the issue.

The pity, of course, is that Peck does not take the next step, and acknowledge that evil comes from the same place as good: the human

personality. Peck's failure to take responsibility for evil by blaming it on the Devil is perhaps the ultimate intellectual laziness, which may or may not be a form of spiritual laziness as well.

Much of *The Different Drum*—Peck's most recent book—is simi-

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larly disfigured by a kind of new scholasticism, in which unseen and unprovable things are assumed to be real, and to possess powers beyond any observable effect. Most of the book has to do with Peck's search for "community," which—as always with him—boils down to a feeling. People meet in groups to discuss their feelings, and pass through certain stages, which culminate in community. But how is that feeling of community translated into a political program? For Peck the feeling is enough: "It is a personal experience so powerful that it can become the driving force behind the quest for peace on a global scale."

The belief that sensibilities can change the world without being expressed in a political form is an astonishing delusion. Yet despite this shortcoming, the last third of *The Different Drum* (titled with typical Peck modesty *The Solution*) contains a surprisingly penetrating analysis of the arms race. Peck identifies the arms race as the supreme modern evil, somewhat predictably comparing it to a game (*à la* Eric Berne's *Games People Play*). But Berne emphasized that there is always an unspoken payoff that players do not want others to see, and which they do not want to face.

Peck identifies this payoff, at least in the U.S., as being economic. "There is considerable reason to believe that we are dependent upon the arms race to maintain our economic stability and our generally high standard of living—that, in fact, the military-industrial complex of this country behaves in such a way as *actually* to support the arms race in order to maintain the economy." Peck points out that another aspect of this game is to keep all such insights out of the major media.

Here is where Peck's original theory of *The Road Less Traveled* becomes a useful social metaphor. In order to avoid the pain of economic depression, American society represses the truth about what it is doing, and ends up with the insanity of nuclear aggression. To avoid short-run pain, it ends up with long-run death.

Peck advocates making over our military establishment into a national service corps, retaining a special "cadre of brave men and women thoroughly trained in the techniques of passive resistance and non-violent action." Economic conversion is absolutely necessary,

and even then there will be "some disruption, some pain." At this point Peck starts getting really radical. "In the minds of many, capitalism, as we currently practice it, is all tied up with 'Americanism' in a prideful bundle of self-satisfaction. Critics who argue for significant change are not welcomed. 'Capitalism, Love It or Leave It,' could be a subtranslation of 'America, Love It or Leave It.'"

Peck softens these ideas somewhat by making it clear that he wants to transform rather than replace American capitalism (by bringing business people into "genuine community"). But he is adamant that the "central problem of capitalism is that it is, in and of itself, amoral." To be transformed, it must submit to a good higher than economic self-interest. "It is unabashedly self-centered. And a will unsubmitted to anything higher than itself is, or will inevitably become, evil. So it is that capitalism, in and of itself, has a profound tendency to 'refuse progress.'"

Any popular writer who publishes ideas like these will eventually feel some heat, so it will be interesting to see what form the inevitable attacks take. At present, Peck is still the nation's most popular speaker, and he shows no willingness yet to back down on his insistence that opposition to the arms race is central to religious commitment. This means that in six months he will influence more people to think about the arms race than the left could in six years. Furthermore, his concept of small groups meeting to discuss issues of community is not unlike the *comunidad de base* (base community) developed by Liberation Theology in Latin America, and is an approach currently being explored by many on the religious left in North America. For these reasons alone Peck is not part of the problem.

But neither is he part of the solution. Community alone is not enough to change things—at some point members of the group must become politically active, either as a group or as individuals. Peck is right when he writes of an underlying sense of evil in American life. But neither the expiatory devices of the evangelicals nor the feeling of being close to others in a spiritual community are enough to address this evil. The key redemptive act is a commitment to social change; and that can happen only when the desire for community is translated into political language. In the future perhaps that translation will become the job of the more sophisticated elements of the religious left. ■

Lawrence Swaim is a novelist who is helping to organize a left-caucus in the Unitarian Universalist denomination.

Walker

Directed by Alex Cox

By Pat Aufderheide

NICARAGUA HAS BEEN AN EXERCISE ground for imperial arrogance—in the last two centuries, British and U.S.—for so long that the petty invasion of filmmaker Alex Cox and crew to make *Walker* there is a mere blip on the landscape. But it is too bad that the movie, made to tap the outrageous history of imperial intervention in Central America, shares the cultural isolationism and bluster that has characterized so many political forays.

There were great hopes for *Walker*, not only by Sandinista partisans and U.S. foreign policy critics, but by film enthusiasts drawn to the hectic energy of Cox's earlier work in *Repo Man* and *Sid and Nancy*. Cox, an English filmmaker now based in Los Angeles, can be a punk poet of celluloid—his theme: anger and desire among the ruins of expectation.

He's been a voice of a youth culture abandoned to itself and struggling for breath in a Thatcher-Reagan atmosphere. His style is ragged, violent, explosive and also mournfully affectionate to the bleakly rebellious. He's been a special gift to character actors and to filmgoers who resist the machine-perfect in prepared entertainment. If his films have carried social commentary, it's not because of any political message but because of the angry, oppositional energy—both battling and expressing alienation—that Cox brings to a project.

Weirder than fiction: William Walker's story attracted Cox. Walker was a mercenary who, encouraged by magnate Cornelius Vanderbilt to make the place safe for Vanderbilt's Central American canal plans, conquered Nicaragua in 1855 and installed himself briefly as president. Partly, it was Cox's impudent desire to make a cinematic statement against what he described to a reporter as a "covertly fascist" U.S.; his hackles were raised in 1984 when he visited El Salvador at a time of elections in both countries. And partly it was the thrill of a true story that was weirder than fiction, populated by obsessives, renegades and madmen.

Thanks to cooperation from the Nicaraguan state film institute and the convenience of Third World wage scales, Cox filmed his deliberately tawdry but lavishly mounted epic in war-torn Nicaragua. Ed Harris as Walker is the center of a film that hugs close to the ragtag group Walker brought with him and who were dubbed at the time, by an ever-hype-happy American media, "The Immortals."

Cox's expressed goal kept jour-



Walker: A clumsy, ineffective anti-imperialist tract.

Alex Cox's *Walker* on the wild side

nalists trekking down to Nicaragua to write a seemingly endless series of location stories on the filming. He wanted, one gathers from his assembled remarks, to make an ironic extravaganza that would simultaneously mock cinematic pretension and political arrogance. Invoking such names as

FILM

Peckinpah, Buñuel and Kurosawa, throwing around references to soap opera, spaghetti westerns and horror films, he claimed to be making a film that stylistically as well as thematically would rail against the banality of imperialism.

He got Rudy Wurlitzer (*Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid*) to write the screenplay, and Wurlitzer freely talked about the need to liberate the tale from political sermonizing, to make sure that, with black humor, self-ridiculing exaggeration and horror, the film would conquer pietistic tendencies in the all-too-timely subject matter. Cox pulled into the project a constellation of celebrated names, including Marlee Matlin to play the role of Walker's fiancée and Clash musician Joe Strummer to do the music (hands down, the best part of the film).

Dust and death: But *Walker* ends up a mere chronicle of excess, without ironic distance. Most of the film takes place in a swirl of dust, skirmishes punctuated by rivulets of movie-movie blood and the occasional spectacular street fire. In-

terludes of speechifying, dining and parlor and bedroom games occur at the leaden pace of provincial opera.

So much of the film is quite simply about mounting a military scene with plenty of extras and explosions that your attention gets drawn to the monumental work of production design (you begin to think about the work of smudging all that clothing into the proper degree of sordidness). You never get drawn into the madness that Harris so diligently tries to register with his intensely controlled performance. Somehow—and perhaps this happened in the editing—whatever surrealistic, magical-realist or postmodern-feisty black humor was promised in the filming has been cut straight out.

Cox seems to believe that the explanation for imperialist adventurism lies in individual psychopathy. Cornelius Vanderbilt (played by Peter Boyle, who is filmed in such fierce closeup that any acting wit he could have brought to the role is wasted) is a megalomaniac madman who recognizes a kindred spirit in the charismatic mercenary Walker. Walker is a visionary so full of his own messianism that he never seems to need to share his vision with his own troops—who die for him anyway.

Crazy like a fox: But no tradition so long as imperial intervention survives on the basis of derangement alone. You may need a few madmen to stand in the front lines, but madness alone is a frail reed

on which to rest historical process. Vanderbilt, if he was crazy, was crazy like a fox, and also working in a long and continuing tradition that conveniently links corporate with political adventurism. Vanderbilt's plans fell through, but the English firm of Brown Brothers picked up where he left off, followed by American interests and Marines. Walker's followers are legion, but only a few are as blissed-out on the righteousness of power as Ollie North.

It's not just that Cox treats interventionism as a personal pathology, as if magnates and presidents were all lunatics, accidentally positioned over the huddling bodies of those helpless victims of history, the masses. Let's not forget that Walker got U.S. presidential backing as well as public adoration, and that he, like every foreign invader so far, eventually lost in Nicaragua.

The problem is that such a portrayal simply makes ordinary narrative impossible. You never believe the action, and you're never entranced enough by fantastic excess to forgive the filmmaker for robbing you of the delicious empathy that the wide screen in the dark promises. Like Walker's men, you're just plowing inexorably through dust to death. **White men's burdens:** And the deaths are all those of The Immortals. There are Nicaraguan bodies (and, although you have to parse the movie to figure it out, other Central Americans, who did unite to expel Walker), but they are more on the order of scenery. A climactic gory scene at the end composes dead

Nicaraguan troops on the steps of the cathedral in a scene intended—once again in a clumsy attempt at historical elision and random indictment of conscienceless power—to evoke the massacre of Salvadorans during the funeral of Archbishop Romero. There are a couple of opportunistic and vacillating Nicaraguan liberal politicians, as well as an overheated Nicaraguan Mata Hari (played engagingly by Mexican actress Blanca Guerra), none of whom is the least illuminate why Walker and The Immortals would have encountered any mass resistance to their conquest.

In the end, the Nicaraguans are statistics, whether they're those anonymous guys in white, looking rather like Mexican revolutionaries, or bodies littering the road. They're the dust in the atmosphere, the confusion brought to the mad manifest-destiny vision of Walker. The blood, and what tragedy there is, belongs to The Immortals. And they've never become interesting enough for us to immerse ourselves in their pathetic suicide.

The vacuity at the center of *Walker* renders Cox's cinematic game-playing coyly artificial. Cox uses anachronism with a heavy hand, pushing the viewer's nose in parallels between Walker then and contrasts now. The film is dotted with modern appliances and plastic; dialogue is punctuated with modern vulgarity; media adoration for the international adventurer then and now is underlined by seeing Walker on the cover of both *Time* and *Newsweek*; and the film resolves with the arrival of a U.S. helicopter carrying a U.S. State Department representative.

The anachronisms don't even shock, possibly because the film locates its characters within their madness, not within their societal epoch. The melodramatic parlor scenes, the spaghetti-western gore, the occasional lapse into silent-movie jerkiness, register not as a crash through the barriers of convention and complacency but as the gestures of a smart-alec filmmaker, a rebel in search of a cause.

The irony of *Walker* is that a film made by someone so preternaturally on top of angry youthful resistance to pseudo-rational pragmatism should end up such a silly, simplistic and, above all, moralistic message movie. Willy-nilly, *Walker* ends up being the flip side of *Latino's* counterfeit coin. If *Latino* flopped for its preachy earnestness, its patronizing and melodramatic portrayal of both North and Central Americans, *Walker* never really challenges that vision. It merely offers spiteful, adolescent backtalk to the clichés that govern interventionist complacency. It ends up a clumsy—and worse, ineffective—anti-imperialist tract rather than a plunge into the heart of darkness.

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Chilean women make a traditional applique art into an intriguing political weapon.

Chilean women excel at the applied arts

Scraps of Life: Chilean Arpilleras

By Marjorie Agosin
Translated by Cola Franzen
The Red Sea Press, 166 pp., \$9.95

By Darcy DeMarco

"Questions"

Where is the son that I love so much?
Where is the warmth of his white hands?
When I call, only silence responds.
Iron chains have left him prisoner
and if you search blindly for your star in the night
you will find only shadows, sadness
and reproaches.
What guard guards the bars of the dark cell that hides you?
they have left me a wound that is uncertainty
and I shout your name that the wind carries away
my throat is raw from calling you.

—from "Testimony #11," a poem written by a Chilean woman whose son has disappeared, which appears in Marjorie Agosin's *Scraps of Life: Chilean Arpilleras*

THROUGHOUT SANTIAGO, THE wound of uncertainty continues to bleed for the women of the Association of the Families of the Detained-Disappeared. Over a decade of silence has worn away any initial hope of seeing husbands, sons and brothers alive; years of poverty and hardship have aged the women.

But against the silence and the poverty these women have found an effective weapon—a weapon fashioned with a needle out of bits

of leftover cloth and burlap sacks. And in the creation of this weapon, the mothers and sisters of Chile have found within themselves a strength they did not know they possessed; an understanding that only long suffering can bring. Forced out of their traditional lives by the destruction of their families, these women have discovered a voice long denied them. And they will not be silenced.

Applied politics: *Scraps of Life: Chilean Arpilleras*, by Marjorie Agosin, tells the story of the *arpilleristas*, the women who have transformed a traditional form of art into a powerful political statement. The *arpillera* is an applique tapestry that in more secure times portrayed quiet pastoral scenes.

But the *arpilleras* of Santiago, born of poverty and violence, tell different tales: armed soldiers, dressed in black, seize the men of a neighborhood as children flee; a group of pilgrims stops at Lonquén, site of a mass grave; women and children surround a huge pot at a soup kitchen. Many *arpilleras* bear slogans: "Truth and justice for the detained disappeared"; "No more torture," and the photo of a vanished loved one. Scenes of life and death, often side by side, all set against the Andes mountains beneath a bright sun. This is not the art of passivity.

Though initially regarded by the women as a way to make money, the *arpilleras* evolved into a potent means of expression. As they continued to sew and gained self-confidence, many of the women began to look at themselves and their sur-

roundings in a new way. "I walked around like an idiot," one woman tells Agosin. "I looked closely at everything. I believe I learned how to see." They also enlarged their perception of their role.

"The *arpilleristas*—housewives, seamstresses, laundresses—assumed a new identity that added an important dimension to their traditional female role," Agosin writes. "Now they were no longer totally tied to domestic chores in their own homes."

As the women became friendly, those who could read began bringing in newspapers to the workshops and reading them aloud, exposing many of the women for the first time to life outside their domestic sphere.

Stronger slogans: And as political consciousness grows, the messages on the *arpilleras* become more powerful. "We are here to denounce what happened to us and to put our anguish into the *arpil-*

PROTEST

leras so others will know," one woman says. "I have made my *arpilleras* because I have a double crime to denounce, the kidnapping of both my son and my brother," states another. In a land where 10,000 have disappeared since 1973, the potential for this pictorial denunciation is virtually unlimited.

Though *arpilleras* are forbidden art in Chile, the workshops have grown from just a few women in 1974 to more than 30 with more than 800 participants. They are afforded protection by the Vicariate of Solidarity, a human rights body of the Catholic Church that provides them with materials and then sells the completed *arpilleras* outside Chile.

Although women from all classes attend the workshops, Agosin says most of them are poor and many are illiterate. "Many of them work as maids during the day," she says, "and then sew early in the morning

(the shantytowns often lack electricity) or late at night." Such hardship does not deter the women. In *Scraps of Life*, Agosin writes, "The movement of the *arpilleristas*, still in its infancy and still to be fully realized even though it has been in existence for more than 14 years, is nevertheless the first autonomous movement in Chile organized by working-class women."

In creating the tapestries, these women have found not only an outlet for their grief, but new depths and possibilities within themselves. *Scraps of Life* details the recent history of women in Chile, and documents how the right was able to manipulate women to bring about Allende's downfall. Agosin provides a sense of Chilean women's lives and how they have been upended by the destruction of their families.

She also makes it clear that despite the abuse these courageous women suffer for daring to speak out—the women of the Association are the only continuous visible opposition to Pinochet—working-class women have made an important jump forward and will not readily go back into the house and keep quiet. As one woman told Agosin, "Women have changed so much that the military themselves made the comment that the biggest mistake they made was in leaving the family members of the disappeared alive."

Darcy DeMarco is a Massachusetts-based freelance writer.

Working overtime to highlight the overlooked

Sisterhood & Solidarity: Feminism and Labor in Modern Times

By Diane Balser
South End Press, 246 pp., \$9.00

By Ellen Cassedy

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO I GRADUATED with a B.A. in American history, and right away I landed a \$2.50-an-hour job as a clerk-typist.

One morning, much to my surprise, I overheard two veteran secretaries—both highly conservative, so I thought—deep in a discussion of whether their boss was a male chauvinist pig. (I believe they decided he was.)

The women in the cubicles near mine hadn't shown up for any feminist marches, they hadn't read any feminist bibles, and more than one took care to let me know that she was "not women's lib." (You might support peace or civil rights, but women's lib you were—or were not.)

But there was no doubt that while my consciousness was being

raised by campus women's groups, women in the office had also been profoundly influenced by feminist ideas.

At that time neither the leaders of the women's movement nor those of the labor movement seemed to know that women like these existed—much less how to get them involved. But within the next several years all that changed.

Feminism gets to work: 9to5, the national association of working women of which I was a founder, started up in Boston in 1972. The Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) was founded in 1974. Women's committees proliferated within individual unions, and everywhere women pushed their way into non-traditional jobs. All of these efforts created a working women's feminism and helped bring women into the mainstream of the labor movement.

Some women joined in because sexism on the job was driving them crazy. Others thought of themselves as underpaid workers first, as women second. But the two con-

cerns—for women's rights and for workers' rights—seemed to fuse naturally. The 9to5 "Bill of Rights for Women Office Workers," for example, called for fair pay—and it called for equal pay. It affirmed "the right to respect as women and as workers."

In *Sisterhood and Solidarity: Feminism and Labor in Modern Times*, Diane Balser, a longtime feminist activist, explores the mobilizing of women "as women and as workers" in three organizations: the Working Women's Association (a creation of suffragists Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony), Union WAGE (a now-defunct San Francisco Bay Area group of the '70s) and CLUW (still thriving). More such collaboration between feminists and unions, she asserts, would benefit the women's movement, the labor movement and all women.

Unfortunately, two of the three case studies intended to illustrate this point are poorly chosen.

Stumbling and bumbling: The Working Women's Association stumbled from one embarrassing mistake to another before folding after 15 months. At its peak it involved 100 women workers.

Union WAGE was founded in 1971 by long-time union activists

Reverberations of a revolution in progress

The Jaguar Smile: A Nicaraguan Journey
By Salman Rushdie
Viking, 170 pp., \$12.95

By Marvin E. Gittleman

OF COURSE THE NICARAGUANS couldn't call the Bombay-born novelist, author of *Midnight's Children* and *Shame*, "Indian." To do that would be linguistically impossible in Spanish: it would churn up the tangled American (North-South-Central-Meso) confusions around just who the people were that Columbus encountered (and nearly exterminated) at the end of the 15th century. So they called Salman Rushdie a *hindú*, despite his Muslim ancestry, and invited him to visit embattled Nicaragua for several weeks last year, where he gathered material for this slim but penetrating travel memoir.

Although outdated by the rush of events, and unable to make its title (drawn from some ambiguous limerick) convincing, *The Jaguar Smile* is a sensitive and generally positive snapshot of the Sandinista revolution at seven years of age, taken from an Asian/European perspective that proves surprisingly illuminating. It also poses interesting questions about the genre of political travelogue, and the ability of writers to resist the lure of apolo-

tics.

Some, like the *Wall Street Journal*, found Rushdie to have fallen into the trap set for him by the wily Sandinista propagandists. But any relatively unbiased reader of *The Jaguar Smile* will be struck by the fairness and balance of Rushdie's account, and of his honesty in openly criticizing his Nicaraguan hosts. Writing when the opposition newspaper *La Prensa* was closed down by orders of the government (it has since reopened), Rushdie declared: "The issue of press freedom was the one on which I absolutely parted company with the Sandinistas." From out of his own bitter experience with a censored press in Pakistan, Rushdie told them flat out that their policy of censorship was "misconceived and dangerous." He explained to a top Sandinista official:

What worries me is that censorship is very seductive. It's so much easier than the alternative. So, no matter what reasons you have right now for closing La Prensa, I don't like it. Not because of what you are, but because of what, if this goes on, you might eventually become.

Right-wing naifs: Rushdie skillfully cuts through much of the cant about supposedly naive, impressionable visitors to revolutionary societies who uncritically apologize even for the crimes of these regimes. Without denying that this

sometimes occurs, he demonstrates a neglected alternative: critical support of governments like the Sandinistas that include the frank discussion of such imperfections about which Rushdie hounded his Nicaraguan hosts. He also reminds us of the contrary danger, unmentioned in neo-conservative tracts like Paul Hollander's *Political Pilgrims*, the starry-eyed naivete (or worse) about right-wing brutality that confuses the contras with freedom fighters,

NICARAGUA

or apologizes for political repression (in places like post-Allende Chile) by equating market freedom with all freedom.

For every journalist and visitor seduced by Sandinista hospitality and by the world-class excellence of *Flor de Caña* (the local rum), far more are probably corrupted by trips arranged by the Puebla Institute and the U.S. Embassy, where the only reality revealed is a kind of right-wing world of political anti-matter. In Nicaragua this past August, for example, I heard a *New York Post* pundit holding forth at the breakfast table of the Intercontinental Hotel in Managua against the *internacionalistas* who come to work on school-buildings, health clinics and agrarian development programs. These folk were deemed the "real imperialists" in Nicaragua, bringing their anti-Western ideas and Marxian convictions down here to befuddle and mislead the impressionable Nicas.

Through all of this political con-

fusion, Salman Rushdie, the author of *Midnight's Children* (a towering work of politically savvy fiction), is a generally reliable guide. His book, and Peter Davis' *Where Is Nicaragua?* (see *In These Times*, Sept. 2), should be read by all those planning a trip to Nicaragua. Rushdie offers a sophisticated, skeptical political intelligence that makes skillful use of a kind of international political lore gathered from all over: the Indian sub-continent where Rushdie was raised and whose Marxist militants he had seen close-up in Kerala, and his London neighborhood (where he lived next door to a house owned by Hope Somoza—wife of Anastasio Somoza III).

He falters only in one or two places, exaggerating the role of elections and undervaluing Sandinista contributions to Somoza's ouster. But this book rings true, and when, sipping *Flor de Caña* myself at a *comedor* in Matagalpa, I read (and helped translate) portions of *The Jaguar Smile* to one of the mid-level Sandinista officials Rushdie had interviewed a year earlier, I had a vivid stereoscopic sense of Rushdie's veracity.

A dramatic climax to *The Jaguar Smile* comes in chapter six where Rushdie reports an interview with Nicaragua's "subtle and erudite" foreign minister, Maryknoll Father Miguel d'Escoto. D'Escoto described—and mimicked—the earlier visit of a White House emissary, who, long before the current Central American Peace plan was underway, offered to iron out difficulties between the U.S. and Nicaragua.

Recognizing that Nicaragua might

have some legitimate security needs, the Reagan representative, who d'Escoto called "Rocky" (an unforgettable character, a kind of Ollie North type, out of Charles Dickens' Gradgrind, possibly even Elliott Abrams himself) inquired what the Nicaraguans might raise in negotiations, should they take place. D'Escoto ventured: "Suppose we both agree to abide by international law?" The North American expressed displeasure with such an approach, which he dismissed as the concerns of a "philosopher" reluctant to concentrate on real "facts." Well, what were the relevant "facts"?

The answer: "These contras on your frontier, *Pardre*. They give you lots of trouble, don't they? Yes, d'Escoto replied, but they wouldn't if you stopped funding them. 'There you go again,' Rocky said. 'More philosophy. You're hopeless, Father. The reality is that these people have been funded, are being funded and will continue to be funded. And they will give you trouble. Those are the facts.... Intelligent men don't want trouble. And you've got trouble.'"

When asked for his suggestion, "Rocky" replied: "It's easy. Just do as we say, and you'll see how this trouble you've got will disappear. Overnight. As if by magic." Although Rushdie admitted that d'Escoto's story of crude *gringo* gangsterism could not be corroborated, few now in the wake of contragate can doubt its verisimilitude.

The strength of Rushdie's book is in its understanding of the Sandinista revolution as a phenomenon anchored in Nicaraguan culture: a society in which leading Sandinista political figures are priests, and others are confirmed Marxists, and some appear to combine both commitments; where militiamen and women, with weapons, hitchhike on the roads; where the people are armed and everyone seems to be a poet; where parents warn their children, go to sleep "or William Walker [the mid-19th-century Yankee freebooter who tried to take over Nicaragua] will get you"; where rock music and Madonna are revered as in the threatening colossus to the north, and in which Walt Whitman is a favorite writer; where the children of poet Rosario Murillo and Commandante Daniel Ortega wear English-language "Masters of the Universe" T-shirts.

The last word is far from in on Nicaragua, but as this review is being written, the peace accords that the Central Americans call "Esquipulas II" look like they might just make it. When Salman Rushdie fulfills his promise to return to Nicaragua, there may very well be a better peace-time test of whether the Sandinistas have been able to build a society that retains freedom as it moves toward socialism. ■ **Marv Gittleman** teaches at the Polytechnic University in New York and has published several books on Central America.

who proved unable to sustain a clear focus or strong leadership. Balser's accounts of the ideological debates that soon came to dominate the group are painful to read. These conflicts led not to an effective plan of action but to WAGE's demise in 1979.

If I were not already a convert to the cause of the feminist/labor alliance, learning about the blunders of these two organizations would have made me want to run in the opposite direction. Certainly the Women's Trade Union League, an

FEMINISM

early 20th-century organization with many years and numerous successes to its credit, would better have made Balser's case.

At the risk of sounding self-promoting, I think 9to5 would also have been a good vehicle to illustrate how an independent women's organization can work successfully with the Service Employees International Union to carry out a nationwide union organizing drive called District 925. This unique arrangement preserves 9to5's autonomy, at the same time bringing its techniques and its leaders into the labor movement.

If the failures of the Working Women's Association and Union

WAGE make for dreary reading, CLUW's history is a joy. From the beginning its leaders expressed their purpose with simple eloquence.

"We are not concerned with taking our brothers' place, said Addie Wyatt of the United Food and Commercial Workers union at an early gathering, "we just want to fill our own places. I am inspired by what unions have already done and by what the labor movement must and can do in the future.... I would like to call upon you to say to every sister in this room: 'I am your sister.' Reach out and touch your sister's hand. Make this world a better place for her if you can.... The union is all of us together."

CLUW's leaders set clear goals regarding organizing, affirmative action on the job, political action, and the participation of women in their unions. Skillfully, they crafted a niche for the organization that combined independence and support from male union leadership. By 1977, AFL-CIO President George Meany was calling himself a feminist. By 1980, CLUW President Joyce Miller had become the first woman to be named to the AFL-CIO Executive Board.

"The labor movement has become sensitized to women's issues

and to organizing women," said Miller in a recent interview. For that important breakthrough CLUW can take considerable credit.

In recent years, feminists and unions have made important progress in refining organizing techniques, winning at the bargaining table, and nurturing a new generation of working women organizers. Indeed, there is no major union that is not trying to address women's issues and involve women workers.

Still, both working women and unions are in deep trouble. Since 1970 the average family income has fallen and the gap between men's and women's pay has widened. Over the same time period the percentage of the workforce represented by unions has dropped from 27 percent to 18 percent. Nine out of ten of the cashiers, social workers, data-entry clerks, janitors and waitresses who make up the heart of the burgeoning service economy have yet to organize.

By 1990 (three years from now) women are projected to be a majority of the workforce. Further, the problems that women workers have always faced—low wages, inadequate benefits and a lack of job security—are coming to characterize men's work, too, in the serv-

ice occupations. Unless women and their concerns truly come to occupy center stage in the labor movement it is hard to see how unions have a viable future.

The women's movement, says Balser, also stands at a crossroads. The defeat of the ERA, the disappointing showing of the gender gap in the 1984 presidential election point to a need for new directions.

"For feminism to actually build economic/political power for broad change," she concludes, "it must unionize women workers. Similarly, labor will have to develop a totally new relationship to women if it is to become a real force."

Balser acknowledges that "there have been conflicts between women and male trade unionists and there has been a history of sexism within the union movement." But "neither the conflict nor the sexism," she suggests, "is inevitable."

Balser urges feminists to go forth and unionize, and she bids labor to welcome them with open arms. Let's hope her message is warmly received by both camps. ■

Ellen Cassedy was a founder of 9to5. She is a speechwriter for the Service Employees International Union.

Summit

Continued from page 3

There is some evidence that Reagan accepted the theological view of the Cold War. As a young man, he was deeply influenced by Chambers' *Witness*—Chambers is the only conservative author that Reagan cites in his 1965 autobiography *Where's the Rest of Me?* He also cited Chambers in his "evil empire" and "focus of evil" speeches—indeed, the latter phrase is taken from *Witness*.

Reagan also appears to have been influenced by the right-wing evangelical view of Armageddon. In 1980, Grace Halsell reports in *Prophecy and Politics*, Reagan told evangelist Jim Bakker, "We may be the generation that sees Armageddon." In a 1983 conversation with Thomas Dine, a lobbyist

for Israel, Reagan said, "You know, I turn back to your ancient prophets in the Old Testament and the signs foretelling Armageddon, and I find myself wondering if we're the generation that's going to see that come about."

These views of the Cold War coexisted uneasily with Reagan's stated willingness to negotiate with the Soviet Union—once American military strength was restored and the Soviet Union accepted the idea of real reductions in nuclear arms. But it was only in the last two years of his presidency that Reaagan's willingness to negotiate overcame his theological assumptions about the Cold War.

If we can believe former Reagan aide Michael Deaver, Nancy Reagan consistently pressured the president to reach an arms agreement with the Soviet Union. "She lobbied the president to soften his line on the Soviet Union," Deaver says in his forthcoming book, *Behind the Scenes*. But Nancy Reagan was aided by Gorbachov's emergence in 1985.

Gorbachov not only made important concessions in negotiations with Reagan. He also appears to have convinced Reagan that he genuinely seeks peace with the U.S. and a measure of human rights at home. According to former administration Communications Director Pat Buchanan, Reagan believes whatever hostility Gorbachov feels toward the U.S. "is rooted in ignorance—from his upbringing—of who we are and what we intend." According to New Right activist Paul Weyrich, Reagan told a meeting of conservatives last September that "Gorbachov is a different kind of Soviet leader, the first to say that his goal is not conquering the West."

Reagan's new view of the Soviet Union and of Gorbachov resolved the battle over arms control that had waged in his administration between State Department "moderates" and Pentagon "hardliners." In agreeing to the INF treaty and in compromising with Congress over Star Wars and continued adherence to SALT II, Reagan showed that he has finally taken the side of the moderates.

As a result, one hardliner after another, beginning with Assistant Secretary of De-

fense Richard Perle, has resigned from the administration. With Reagan's blessing, Secretary of State Shultz and Shultz' principal adviser Paul Nitze are now in charge of the administration's arms control policy.

Having become a convert to peaceful co-existence, Reagan is now in a position to continue the legacy of another converted from Cold War theology, Richard Nixon. Nixon called his policy detente. Reagan will have to find another name for his. —J.B.J.

Haiti

Continued from page 9

In retrospect, many Haitians believe that the election was doomed from the start. Yet they needed to go through with it to prove to the world not only that Haitians want democracy, but also that the military is preventing them from achieving it. Now that Namphy has revealed his plan to control Haiti by force, many Haitians believe they have a legitimate reason actively to oppose his rule.

Although the question of foreign intervention looms large, Haitians interviewed a week after the election were wary of trying to find an outside solution to their problem, which many bluntly term "fascism" or a return to terror.

"We need to unite to form a common front," said Louis Roy, a principal author of Haiti's new constitution. Roy supports diplomatic and trade sanctions as steps foreign governments might take to force the Namphy government to halt its campaign of terror and restore the democratic process. But he says that Haitians will have to find the formula to fight the Macoutes. "We have to come up with the answer because we are

the ones who are going to have to live or die with the result."

The toll rises: Right now, Haitians appear to be both living and dying. As *In These Times* went to press reports continued to surface about military arrests and killings of youths who allegedly participated in the civilian vigilante brigades. Meanwhile, the full story of Haiti's election-week violence is slowly emerging. To date, unofficial reports place the November 29 death toll at more than 80. Other reports indicate that dozens more may have been killed before and after the election.

Haitians remain stunned but not silenced by the events of election week. Political leaders and civic organizations have so far resisted Namphy's efforts to form a new election council and carry on with elections. A partially successful two-day national strike December 7-8 was their first public display of opposition to the CNG. More importantly, Haitians have begun openly to consider armed resistance.

"The only thing Namphy seems to understand is guns," said Roy. "If the massacres continue, taking up arms may be our only defense."

Ann-christine d'Adesky covers Haiti regularly for *In These Times*.

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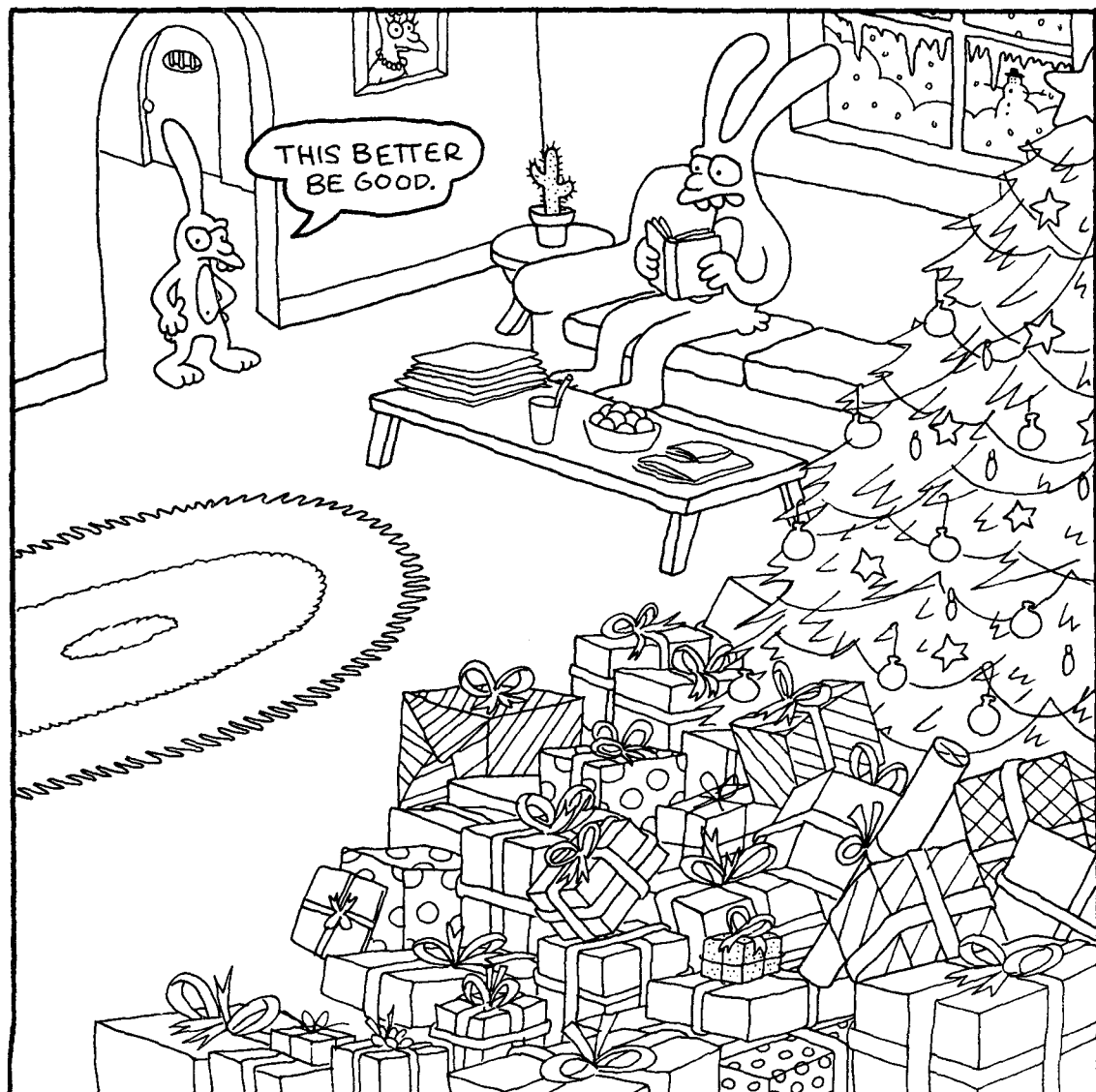
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SURREAL ESTATE



Kathleen Weaver

By David Volpendesta

CLARIBEL ALEGRIA'S LAST NAME IS an index to her vivacity. On a reading and lecture tour of the U.S. for her magical-realist memoir, *Luisa in Realityland* (Curbstone Press), the Salvadoran writer was characteristically ebullient when she sat down to talk in Berkeley prior to a benefit reading for CISPES (Committee in Solidarity with the People of El Salvador).

Born in Estelí, Nicaragua in 1924, Alegria's mother was Salvadoran and her father, a doctor, was Nicaraguan. When she was 9½ months old the family moved to Santa Ana, El Salvador. "My father was very revolutionary. He fought against the Yankee Marines in 1912 with Benjamín Zeledón," she explained. "The Marines started harassing him so much that my mother decided she couldn't stay in Nicaragua anymore.... My father was exiled for life because after Sandino's assassination (my father was a supporter of Sandino), he started writing about Somoza and Somoza put a price on his head."

Her father was also a supporter—and frequent drinking companion—of Farabundo Martí, the Salvadoran revolutionary hero who in 1932 led a *campesino* uprising against the military dictatorship of Maximiliano Martínez. Speaking of the *matanza* (massacre) of 30,000 *campesinos* that ensued from the crushed revolt, El Salvador's internationally renowned poet Roque Dalton once wrote: "In 1932 all of us were born half dead."

Shot in the dark: Alegria retains vivid memories of that fateful year. "It's amazing how children can remember," she reflected. "My room happened to be in front of the National Guard building. And I remember my brother and I standing at the window and seeing the *campesinos* being brought to the *Guardia Nacional* with their thumbs tied

behind their backs.... At night, I remember that I was awakened by the sounds of gunfire."

The memories precipitated by that traumatic event were submerged in her subconscious until the Cuban Revolution, when, as she stated: "All of those scenes started reviving in me because for the first time I thought, 'Well, maybe there's something that can be done.' Before I thought nothing could be done."

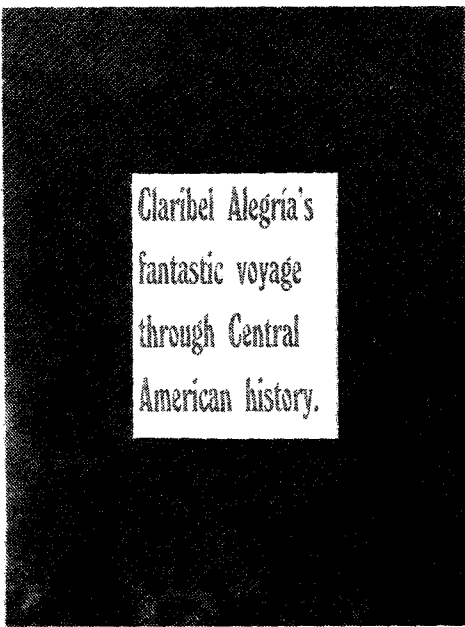
Alegria did not head for the mountains. Instead, encouraged by Darwin (Bud) Flakoll, to whom she's been married for 40 years (they have four children and are expecting their 10th grandchild), she began to cultivate her memories. They became so obsessive that she and Flakoll, who is a journalist as well as her translator, decided to collaborate. The result was *Cenizas de Izalco* (one of nine books they've written together), a historical novel of El Salvador that focuses on the *matanza* of 1932. It will be published next year in England and the U.S. (Curbstone Press), as will be *The Women of the Sumpul River* (University of Pittsburgh Press), a book of Alegria's poems.

Contours of memory: *Luisa in Realityland*, her most recent book, is an autobiographical odyssey in prose and verse in which she functions in a manner similar to that of a cartographer. Tracing the heights, depths and contours of her memory, Alegria (the Luisa of the title, as well as the persona of one of the book's characters, the Gypsy), charts the most recondite and trauma-laden regions of her psyche.

But in contradistinction to Lewis Carroll, whose *Alice in Wonderland* is evoked by the title, this book is not a journey through the looking glass of an individual psyche propelled by abstract mathematical concepts and the iridescent dreams induced by the opium, poppy. Rather, it is an attempt to illuminate and expurgate the unregenerated neurotic/

psychotic content of her own subconscious and the collective subconscious of Central America. As such it relies upon the subversive power of memory to confront and anneal the pattern of successive conquests that have been, so far, Central America's historical legacy.

Alegria was originally encouraged by her friends, as well as the deceased Argentinian writer Julio Cortázar and his wife Aurora,



to write the book in the early '60s while she was living in Paris. She did not actually begin working on it until the early '70s. At first it was a compilation of memories. "But when I finished writing all of those memories," she said, "I realized I had to have poems, too. The poems are to me a reflection of what happened."

They also serve to give the book the optical effect of a series of symmetrical mirrors simultaneously reflecting inward and outward. They also sustain one of its main themes: love. In "The Cartography of Memory," the poem that ends the book, she

writes: "It is difficult to sing you/ when a heavy boot/ with foreign hobnails/ tears and cleaves/ your flesh... Now is a time of war/ of steps leading upward/ of love that seeds dream... Once more there'll be peace/ but of a different kind... it will be a rebellious/ contagious peace/ a peace that opens furrows/ and aims at the stars... Come, love, let's return/ to the future."

Mixed influences: Profoundly influenced by comparative religion, myth, her own dreams and Jungian psychology, which has served to explain her many mystical experiences, Alegria is careful to avoid the twin pitfalls of isolation and elitism that normally consume artists who probe the subconscious and its mysteries. She's also careful, given that she's a well-known human-rights advocate in Central America, not to let her poetry sink into the propaganda quagmire. "What is happening in Nicaragua and El Salvador is my great obsession," she said. "But I realize the great danger of using poetry to renounce [human rights abuses]."

Instead Alegria, who has been internationally acclaimed as one of Central America's leading poetic voices, intends to keep searching for those areas of consciousness where her most personal and intimate moments intersect with the social and historical dimensions of everyday life. Although comfortable with other literary genres (she's well known in Latin America for her *testimonios*), her roots are decisively poetic—so much so that when she first came to the U.S. at 18, one of the first writers she established contact with was Nobel Prize-winning poet Juan Ramón Jiménez, who, already aware of her work, invited her to study with him.

Three days a week, while she was working as a translator for the Pan American Union and attending night classes at George Washington University, where she earned her B.A. in philosophy and letters, Alegria went to Jiménez' house and worked on her art. "Juan Ramón was the person who put together my first book of poems. More than anything else, he taught me humility," she laughed.

Currently living in Nicaragua, where her son works in the Ministry of the Interior ("All my children work in solidarity with El Salvador and Nicaragua," she beamed), Alegria is not welcome in El Salvador. In fact, during the whole of our conversation, the only time a look of profound sadness crossed her face was when she spoke of her exile from the country that Ronald Reagan assures us is a struggling democracy and whose president, José Napoleón Duarte, has been, according to Bob Woodward's recent book *Veil*, a C.I.A. "asset" since 1980.

"The last time I went to El Salvador was to spend Christmas with my mother in 1979," she said. "In March of 1980 was the assassination of Archbishop Romero. Ever since then I felt the great necessity to speak more for El Salvador and renounce the things that were happening there.... And then I learned it was very dangerous for me to go to El Salvador, so much so that when my mother died in 1982 I wanted to go there and be with her, but my brother told me, 'Don't go. There will be two funerals instead of one.'"

David Volpendesta, a San Francisco writer, is co-editor of the forthcoming *City Lights* collection of Central American short stories, *Clamor of Innocence*.